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GEORGE DIGBY
SECOND EARL OF BRISTOL

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GEORGE DIGBY, SECOND EARL OF BRISTOL.

Houbraken. After Vandyke.

Frontispiece.

GEORGE DIGBY

SECOND EARL OF BRISTOL · *By*

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*Author of "Life of Endymion Porter," "Life of
the Great Earl of Cork," "A Lost Leader," etc.*

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INTRODUCTION

MOST OF THOSE who have written on George Digby have been content to reproduce Horace Walpole's opinion that he was "a singular person whose life was one contradiction. He wrote against poetry and embraced it ; he was a zealous opponent of the Court and a sacrifice for it ; was conscientiously converted in the midst of his prosecution of Lord Strafford and was most unconscientiously a persecutor of Lord Clarendon. With great parts he always hurt himself and his friends ; with romantic bravery he was always an unsuccessful commander. He spoke for the Test Act though a Roman Catholic, and addicted himself to astrology on the birthday of true philosophy."

This is so witty and epigrammatic that it seems almost a pity to ask if the portrait is quite true. But we must remember that Walpole and most other biographers have merely reproduced the opinions of Edward Hyde, the great Lord Clarendon. For the extraordinary fate befell this extraordinary man that he should be chiefly remembered through the memoir written by his bitterest enemy. And when that enemy was the greatest historian of his century, it is no wonder that Digby has been handed down to posterity as Clarendon intended him to be seen.

Clarendon does not actually caricature his quondam friend, that would be to give his purpose away, but a little twist here, a little omission there, and the portrait is all the more cruel for its likeness to the original.

But a suspicion is awakened in anyone who reads the story carefully ; if Digby was such a mere butterfly, why did Clarendon use all his genius in breaking this butterfly upon a wheel ? It is true that "to be wroth with one we love doth work like madness in the brain," but why did Clarendon love Digby so heartily for so many years ? Why was Digby the intimate friend of the two men we can entirely trust among the seventeenth-century statesmen—Falkland and Ormonde ? How was it that Digby stood almost alone in his confidence in Montrose during the Civil Wars and in his admiration for Sandwich after the Restoration ?

Introduction

Faults and follies Digby had in plenty, and when dowered with audacity, beauty, wealth, wit, and position, it would have been strange if he had not turned his own head from time to time; but on a good many points, his views, being touched with imagination, were a good deal in advance of most of his contemporaries, and it is not always a happy thing to be in advance of one's age.

One gift fortune gave him that never failed him, an elasticity of spirits that refused to be crushed. When one plan failed he was always ready with another. When one country proved to be inhospitable, he turned to another and discovered that he was very lucky to have been obliged to move; even when royal favour was lost he made himself very happy in retirement translating Spanish plays.

Any account of Digby must seem flat compared to Clarendon's superb satire and invective, but even if facts are dull, it is no harm to know both sides of history. Yet unfortunately the enigma of his character can never be completely solved, as his private correspondence is not available, and probably has not been preserved.

I have to return sincere thanks for information given by the late Adeline Duchess of Bedford; Lady Caroline Courteney and Miss B. Wingfield Digby. Also to Miss D. K. Broster, for exhaustive notes on the King's journey to Spain, and to Margaret Lady Verney, for leave to reproduce her portrait of the Countess of Bristol.

I also wish to express gratitude for the help given by the Rev. R. Shann and Mr. H. Bowen; also to the Very Rev. the Dean of Lichfield for a transcript of Dean Higgs's *History of the Siege of Lichfield*, and to Professor Sir C. H. Firth for his generous counsel and sympathy.

The chief authorities for Digby's life are, first of course, Clarendon's brilliant little sketch placed in the third volume of his State Papers and then Clarendon's own autobiography and *History of the Great Rebellion*. Carte's *Life of Ormonde* gives an account of Digby's life in Ireland and on the Continent, Warburton's *Life of Prince Rupert*, and the Carte, Clarendon, and Tanner MSS. in the Bodleian, all contain letters from him and to him.

The edition of Clarendon's *History* referred to is that of 1807; Warburton's *Life of Prince Rupert* is the edition of 1849.

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Houbraken. After Vandyke

ANNE DIGBY, COUNTESS OF BRISTOL . . . *Facing page 148*
Vandyke. In possession of Margaret Lady Verney

GEORGE DIGBY

SECOND EARL OF BRISTOL

I

PROMISE

OF ALL THE CENTURIES ENGLAND has lived through, perhaps the seventeenth is the easiest for us moderns to understand. It is hard to become intimate with people who wrote no letters at all, or who wrote them in Norman-French or Chaucer's English ; while in quite recent times, in the days of the Dandies or of the Coffee-houses the life was a specialised one, it depended on town fashions, and the town and the fashions have gone with "*les neiges d'antan*."

In the seventeenth century most of the great folk were country gentlemen who led lives not so unlike those of country gentlemen of the last generation. They hunted, and shot, and bred bullocks or deer, and grumbled at the bad harvests or the parson's new-fangled ways in a very nineteenth-century fashion.

But for all the seclusion of their lives they were no Squire Westerns. If they had no lending libraries they invited literary men to pay them visits that sometimes extended to years, they had newsletters sent from London, they read the books we still read, they talked English only a little better than that we use, they were christened and married and buried with the Services of the Prayer Book that is familiar to us ; in all matters of real importance we are one with the gentlemen of the days of the Long Parliament.

We are one at least with the majority of them. Some were enigmas to their contemporaries, and are hardly less perplexing to us, and of these enigmatic persons perhaps George Digby, Second Earl of Bristol, is the most exasperating.

Promise

Digby's character really reminds us of the old folk-tales of the fairy godmothers whose gifts were all nullified by the old hag who came unbidden to the christening. Endowed by nature with beauty, grace, wit, courage, a lively imagination and a cool head—of good birth and great wealth, in the words of Horace Walpole, "He always hurt himself and his friends, and with romantic bravery was always an unsuccessful commander," and no research explains why this was so; we can only conclude that he was too clever by half, and that his brilliant qualities neutralised each other.

As is proper in folk-tales, Digby's father had been a younger son, of a family that traced its pedigree back to the time of Henry the Second, when an ancestor was settled on the estate of Digby in Leicestershire. They fought at Towton, and the head of the family was knighted on the field of Zutphen. The elder son of this knight married the daughter and heir of the Great Earl of Kildare; the handsome shrewd younger son John was the father of our hero.

John Digby was so fortunate as to come to the Court of King James during an interregnum of favourites and took the King's fancy. He was sent on more than one embassy which he conducted with credit, and was rewarded with the estates of Sherborne in Dorset, estates that had passed from one royal favourite to another; taken from Raleigh to be given to Carr, and from Carr to be given to Digby. John Digby married Beatrix, daughter of Charles Walcot of Walcot, Salop, widow of Sir John Dyve. She had by her first husband one son, Lewis, of whom Evelyn says "he was a valiant gentleman, but not a little given to romance when he spoke of himself." As her eldest son by John Digby was also not averse to romancing, we may guess that Lady Digby had a lively imagination, and that her son George owed more to her than to his wise and shrewd father.

George was born in Madrid in the year 1612 when his father was Ambassador to Spain. The date is written in the beginning of a copy of Clement Marot's *Psalms* in the library at Sherborne Castle. For thirteen years the boy was educated in Madrid, so that Spanish was as familiar to him as English, and he understood, or thought he understood, all the characteristics of the Spanish character and of Spanish diplomacy.

Sir John Digby had arrived with great pomp in Madrid in

George Digby's Father

1611 to negotiate a marriage between the Prince of Wales and the Spanish Infanta. When Henry Prince of Wales died, the project was only carried over to his successor, Prince Charles, and the matter was debated and closed and reopened more times than are worth counting up, and to encourage him to continue this laborious twisting ropes of sand, Digby in 1622 was created Earl of Bristol.

Young George Digby as a clever boy of eleven must have been quite able to appreciate the situation when his dismayed father was roused from bed to receive the two muffled visitors, who proved to be the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Buckingham, come to take the courtship into their own hands. It is needless to re-tell the story of Prince Charles's visit to Spain, but we must remember that it was at this time that Buckingham not only worried Charles and horrified the Spaniards, but also started the deadly quarrel with Lord Bristol and vowed to be his ruin.

The Prince and Buckingham finally got away in safety, though without the bride they had come to fetch ; Bristol was left a while longer to play the farce of courtship as completely deceived as were the Spaniards, and when the match was finally broken off his industry was rewarded by the command to retire to Dorset and confine himself to his own house.

The Prince, who in spite of Buckingham sometimes had an opinion of his own, saw the injustice of this usage, and himself took Lady Bristol to plead her husband's cause with the King, but in vain. It was not the old King's opinion that counted, Buckingham was the power behind the throne, and before long Buckingham carried out his threats, and Bristol was committed to the Tower. There he tried a new advocate, and despatched his boy to carry a petition, not to the King but to the Commons. George delivered the petition with a little speech of his own, and his beauty, grace, and self-possession astonished all who were there and made them prophesy a brilliant future for him.

But even George's fascination could not win complete indemnity for his father. Bristol was indeed released from the Tower, but was forbidden to take part in public life. He therefore returned to Dorset and devoted himself to beautifying his house at Sherborne. It is not easy to make out how much of the splendid New Lodge that rose near the old episcopal fortress of Sherborne was built by the first Earl of Bristol. Raleigh designed

Promise

the main body of the house, but the wings appear to be of later date, and may be the work of the first Earl or of his son or grandson. All three had a fine taste in building, quite regardless of cost; and as the Digby ostrich and fleur-de-lis appear constantly on the ceilings and woodwork, it seems probable that most of the inside fittings were added after the property had passed from Raleigh. Pope in a letter written from Sherborne attributes the four wings to the first Earl, and describes a high green terrace that ran the whole breadth of the garden, and five more terraces hanging under each other, with groves and a canal.¹

In those days, when travelling was difficult, the dwellers in country houses had to depend, like the immortal Mrs. Elton, on "internal resources." Fine gentlemen collected not only books but also intellectual visitors. Sherborne may not have been quite as Falkland's house of Great Tew "a little University," but it was the resort of most of the learned men who visited England from France or Spain, and in the words of Clarendon, George Digby enjoyed "besides the benefit of his father's information, a very liberal conversation with men of the best quality and parts who frequently resorted thither as to a house where they found a very good reception."

But the New Lodge was not only a resort of learned men. Although nothing could be less like a cave of Adullam, every one who was discontented, who had suffered under James, from the insolence of Buckingham, and under Charles from the tyranny of Strafford, made his way to Lord Bristol's house for advice or assistance, and such society, sharpened by the constant feeling of his father's wrongs, settled the political bias of young Digby.

From this delightful home George was sent in 1626 to Magdalen College, Oxford, a Magdalen that stood between the east gate of the city and the beautiful narrow bridge across the Cherwell, a Magdalen that had no New Buildings, nor St. Swithin's, but was shut in by its own lovely quadrangle. There the boy of fourteen entered, being, says Clarendon, "excellently prepared by his youthful studies for that approach," and there spent several years "with notable success in all kinds of learning," and made a warm friendship with a brilliant, very young Don, Peter Heylin. His future friend Hyde had left Oxford as Digby came up, so it was not till later that these two very dissimilar men became intimate.

¹ *Country Life*, September 24, 1910.

An Accomplished Young Man

George's Oxford studies seem to have extended over a good many years, as he did not take his M.A. till 1636.

"He then,"¹ Hyde tells us, "went into France—in the language whereof he was well versed and had been carefully instructed, and after some time spent there in a condition liberally supported for any virtuous improvement of himself, but not for riotous impertinence, he returned again to his country and his father's house, the most accomplished person that that nation, or it may be that any other at that time, could present to the world, to which his beauty, comeliness and gracefulness of his person gave no small lustre."

Another good critic, Anthony Ashley Cooper, wrote how at this time: "The Lord Digby, a very handsome young man of great courage and learning and of a quick wit, began to show himself to the world and gave great expectations of himself, he being greatly admired by all and only gave himself disadvantage with a pedantic stiffness and affectation he had contracted."²

As the same complaint was later made of Arlington Digby's secretary on his return from Spain, we must suppose the jolly English gentlemen of the time were rather taken aback by Spanish formality.

It adds to the charm of this delightful young man to find he seems to have been quite content in the "blessed retreat" of Sherborne and made little effort to escape into the gay world. Hyde hints that it was a happy fate that kept his fascinating friend out of the way of mischief, and as he continued to study "he now formed habits which were his support when later on he plunged into public life." Certainly the one visit to London of which we hear in 1634 was likely to make Lord Bristol wish to keep his son in the country. For George fell so violently in love with a lady of the Court that he came to blows with a rival.

Digby was about to escort the lady downstairs when a Court favourite named Will Crofts pushed between them; Digby immediately made him apologise, but months afterwards he heard that Crofts was going about boasting that by his forwardness he had not only pleased himself but also pleased the lady and that he had kicked Digby. On this of course Digby challenged him. They met in the Bowling Alley in Springfields and Crofts was wounded and disarmed.³

¹ Supp. to III., Chrenjon State Papers, 51.

² *Autob. Shaftesbury.*

³ *The Ancestor*, XI., 1904, H. M. Digby.

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Will Crofts was a noted fire-eater, and some people said he was as cowardly as he was insolent; but as he fought both Digby and his stepbrother Dyves, he cannot on this occasion be accused of slackness. Croft's share in the quarrel was quickly hushed up, for he was a popular man in Court society and his sister was a maid of honour.

Digby and Dyves fared worse. In spite of Digby's plea that he took Spring Gardens for a common bowling place, where all paid money for coming in, the lawyers decided that the place was technically within the precincts of Whitehall, where it was treason to draw a sword, and he was "first committed to prison and afterwards very severely persecuted with circumstances not usual to persons of that quality, so that he was forced again to retire into the country with so much more acrimony towards the Court as his own particular reckoning added to his father's account, which increased more the stock of his reputation to those that judged of men's affection to their country by the disaffection the Court had for them."¹

Digby's marriage in 1635 or 1636 took him into a family that shared in Lord Bristol's dignified disapproval of the tyrannies and follies of the Stuart regime. Lady Anne Russell was daughter of the great Earl of Bedford who undertook the scheme of draining the fens known as the Bedford Level, and was so noted for his wisdom that some people believed if he had lived his counsels might have prevented the Civil War.² Lady Anne's sisters also married men who were no favourites with the Court, Lord Brooke and Lord Manchester.

It is tantalising that we know so little of Anne Digby. The old Earl of Cork who had fled into Somerset from Strafford's Irish tyranny wrote in his diary of a visit from Lord Bristol and his daughter-in-law, "daughter of the much to be honoured Earl of Bedford," but was much too busy over his own affairs to note anything of the bride's looks or disposition. She was a woman of courage and spirit, and when old and widowed, Evelyn wrote of her as a "grave and honourable lady," but that scanty information tells little. She followed her husband's political changes with the splendid fidelity of seventeenth-century ladies, but how much she approved of them or of his many other varieties we have no grounds even to guess.

¹ Cl. S.P.

² Diary of the great Earl of Cork.

Sir Kenelm Digby

During these quiet years at Sherborne Digby continued to study in many different lines. Some of his books on astrology, and horoscopes drawn up by him are still at Sherborne Castle, and his own horoscope may still be seen by the curious in the Bodleian Library. He also took up theology with a great deal of industry, though he was a little shy about this particular line,¹ and "took care if any of his friends were likely to show a copy of one of his discourses on religion that someone else in the company should be able to produce some facetious discourse or copy of verses in English or Latin that he should not be looked on as too grave or serious for his age." So his little book on the differences between the Anglican and Roman Churches, although written in 1638-9, was not published till twelve years later. This book was in the form of a controversy with his cousin Sir Kenelm Digby.

Sir Kenelm was an even more astonishing person than his young kinsman, and might be almost called a caricature of George. Where George was brave, Sir Kenelm was quixotic; where George was a student, Sir Kenelm was a bookworm; where George was unexpected, Sir Kenelm was eccentric to the edge of madness. He was said to be

The ages wonder for his noble parts.
Skilled in six tongues
And learn'd in all the arts.*

"He had so graceful elocution and noble address that had he been dropt out of the clouds in any part of the world he would have made himself respected, but the Jesuits who cared not for him spoke spitefully and said 'twas true, but then he must not have stayed there above six weeks.'"

This elder cousin was just the man to fascinate George Digby, and it was very likely to protect himself from this too absorbing influence that he wrote his book, a really painstaking and learned little production, full of quotations from the Early Fathers, and in after years, "when he grew to have a better opinion of the Catholic religion or a worse of his own," he never attempted to answer the arguments he had drawn up in his youth.

During this peaceful time most of George Digby's children were born—two sons and three daughters survived. One at least died in infancy, for in 1637 "My Lord Digby's child was interred" in the church at Chenies among the tombs of its mother's people.

* Clarendon.

* Wood, *Ath.*, III. 688.

M.P. FOR DORSET

THE IDYLIC LIFE at Sherborne was really only an example of the comfort and happiness that reigned all over England in the beginning of the seventeenth century. While the rest of Europe was ravaged by war England enjoyed profound peace. The beautiful Jacobean mansions and the solid farm houses with mullioned windows, that we still admire, were rising on every country-side.

The upper classes were wealthy and intelligent, the merchants were extending their trade all over the world, the working men were still healthy country folk, for the disabled and aged the poor-law was, we are told, better administered than it has ever been before or since ;¹ and the King, Charles the First, was exceptionally high-minded, religious and virtuous.

There was indeed one flaw in all the perfection of this Golden Age—no Parliament had been called for eleven years ; but in a country where steady government had gone on for many centuries, the necessary administration of the laws continued so automatically, that on the surface there seemed to be no cause of complaint.

But Englishmen, whether peers or peasants, considered that they had very serious cause of complaint. They persisted in believing that it was better to be free even than to be comfortable, and no one could deny that every year was filching away some morsel of long-cherished independence. While this irritation was smouldering in England, a real conflagration broke out in Scotland.

The King had long wished to assimilate the usages of the Scottish Church to those of England. In 1637 the use of an Anglican Prayer Book brought on a riot in St. Giles Cathedral in Edinburgh, and two years later the disturbance had grown so

¹ Leonard, *Hist. Eng. Poor Law. Life of the Great Earl of Cork*, p. 186.

The First Scotch War

serious that the King had to summon his English nobility to appear in arms with their followers.

The Scots' resentment was backed by an excellent army, well drilled and well found. The King marched North at the head of troops that were neither the one nor the other. His campaign was lost before it was begun, and the only result was that he had to call together a Parliament in England to pay his useless and mutinous soldiers. In this "Short Parliament," as it was nicknamed, George Digby sat for the County of Dorset, but the assembly had no time to formulate its complaints before the King lost patience and dissolved it. Then affairs began to move quickly; the Scots invaded England, and found themselves received not as invaders, but as brothers.

The hapless King once again marched North, and this time he was strengthened by the presence of Strafford; but his forces were routed by the Scots at Newburn, and as a last expedient the King was driven to call a council of peers to advise him. Bedford and Bristol came with the other lords, and nearly all were preparing to urge His Majesty to call a Parliament when he cleverly forestalled them and announced that he had decided already to do so, at the desire of the Queen. So the Council could only express its pleasure at the news and smother its vexation at Her Majesty's interference. Bedford and other lords of popular leanings were sent as commissioners to the Scots, with whom they were at one on most subjects, especially in their dislike of Strafford, Archbishop Laud, and Hamilton.

Matters being on such a friendly footing, it was easy to come to an agreement. The Scots were to be rewarded for invading England by a payment of £850 a day till a permanent treaty could be drawn up; and the King hurried back to London to call together the fatal Long Parliament.

George Digby was again elected for Dorset and quickly became one of the most noticeable of the members. His friends being among those who "were resolved to find fault with everything that was amiss," it was obvious on which side of the House he would sit.

It is curious on reading the records of the Long Parliament to realise how insular, and even parochial, most English gentlemen were. Well educated, many of them had travelled and had spent months on the Continent, or at the least had gone on the Grand

M.P. for Dorset

Tour ; but like a water-beetle who dives enclosed in his own little bubble of air, these Englishmen had travelled bucklered with the serene certainty that England was the only free, sensible, comfortable country in existence, and they came back as insular as they went out. Now, in spite of some anxiety about the conditions in Ireland, they were more absorbed in the question of how many times the Vicar of All Hallows, Barking, bowed during service, or how many little statues decorated his altar rails, than in any questions of Scots invaders, Algerian pirates, or the fate of the one popular and Protestant Stuart—Elizabeth, Queen of Hearts, and of Bohemia.

In the days when sermons were the chief intellectual food of most of the nation, it was to be expected that Parliamentary speeches should be long-winded, but also the average Member was too often apt to grow incoherent in his statements of grievances. So came Digby's chance. With the elegance of a scholar and the ease of a man of the world, he took up the rough arguments of the popular party, polished their shafts and gave point to their sallies, and "the loveliness of his person and charm of his manner" fascinated all who heard him, so that in spite of some small affectations of which hypercritical friends complained, his wit and eloquence shine even to-day like jewels among the dusty records of Parliamentary Debates. On religious matters he was always reverent and even devout, while on wordly questions he could make most excellent fun of his opponents. He was indeed happy and glorious, especially happy in the friends who sat near him, Falkland and Hyde and Culpepper, whose sense and prudence helped to steady him, while their party reaped the advantage of his brilliance.

Hyde admits that Digby was hardly so familiar with Falkland as with himself and Culpepper, "for he was hardly a man of that exactness to be in the entire confidence of the Lord Falkland, who looked upon his infirmities with more severity than did the other two"—yet even with Falkland Digby had "a free conversation and kindness."

In the beginning of November Digby was chosen, with Pym, Selden, Harley, and Rudyard, to draw up a Remonstrance against ship-money, pressing of soldiers, monopolies, all the hundred and one torments, great and small, that had pricked the nation into madness during the eleven years without a Parliament. For

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whether the grievances to discuss were small or great, one thing was clear to the popular leaders. They were resolved that never again should eleven such years pass.

A Bill was introduced for the calling of triennial Parliaments, and was supported by Digby in a most persuasive speech.¹ He begins: "Take into view, Gentlemen, a State, in a state of the greatest quiet than can be fancied—all the rest of the world in combustions and uncomposable wars. Take into your view, Sir, a King, Sovereign to three Kingdoms by the centering of all the Royal lines in his person as indisputable as any mathematical ones in Euclid, a King firm and knowing in his religion, eminent in virtue," and so on—"this is one Map of England, Mr. Speaker," and then he describes a country in which "the liberty and property of the subject is ravished away by a pretended necessity, a triple crown shaking with distempers,—men of the best consciences ready to fly into the wilderness for religion." (Did he know how nearly Cromwell did so?) "Would not one swear this were the antipodes of the other? And, let me tell you, Mr. Speaker, this is a map of England too, and both at the same time true." He reminded them that the King might at this crisis remove their grievances, yet they would "grow again like Sampson's locks and pull the House upon our heads, without the guard of Parliament."²

In February 1641 a petition was presented against Bishops which Digby dextrously used to forward his wish for triennial Parliaments. When the petition was first introduced, he admitted "I profess I looked upon it then with terror, as upon a comet or Blazing Star, raised and kindled out of the stench, out of the poisonous exhalation of a corrupted hierarchy. Methought the comet had a terrible tail with it, Sir, and pointed to the North" (where the Scottish army was supporting all these discontents). "But," he continued, "I look not upon this petition as a petition from the City of London, but from I know not what 15,000 Londoners, all that could be got to subscribe."

He then went on to make game of the details of the petitions and the scandals of wearing a rochet, or a four-cornered cap! Were such arguments to extirpate Bishops, and a Church that had been established by Parliament! "Was a Multitude to teach a Parliament what was or was not Government according to

¹ Rushworth, III. 170.

² *Ibid.*, IV. 172.

M.P. for Dorset

God's Word ?" Such interference with Parliament was "a high presumption."

Then he detailed what he held to be the real dangers, not four-cornered caps, but "the insolence and exorbitance of the Prelates."

But that English episcopacy, "glorified by so many martyrdoms in the Primitive Church and some since our own blessed Reformation, a Government admired, I speak it knowingly, by the learnedest of the Reformed Churches abroad," that "Such a Government, such a function, should at the fag end of 1640 years be found to have such a close devil in it as no power can exorcise, no law restrain, appears to me, Sir, a thing very improbable ! I profess I am deceived, Sir, if Triennial Parliaments will not be a circle able to keep many a worse devil in order." The old exorcists used to take their stand in a magical circle, before endeavouring to call up the devil. Sir Kenelm had doubtless often discussed that alarming experiment with his cousin, and George very clearly saw there were even worse devils in political rancour than any Sir Kenelm could raise.

But whether this petition were genuine or no, the Commons were no friends to the Bishops, and finally a Root and Branch Bill was introduced to abolish them entirely. Digby admitted he should like very well to see the Bishops' wings clipped, but "if we hearken to those who would quite extirpate them I am confident that instead of every Bishop put down in a diocese we should erect a Pope in every parish."

It was many a year before Milton told the world that Presbyter was only Priest writ large, yet even then sensible men were not very far apart in mind even if called by very different names.

Digby was not alone in his protests. This attack on the Church of England, and the Root and Branch Bill introduced in May, "accentuated the division in the popular party, and Hyde and Lord Falkland severed themselves definitely from their former friends." ¹

It was possible to discuss most of these questions with reasons and even with epigrams, but there was a greater matter that had to be faced that left no room for jest.

On the 11th of November, 1640, Mr. Pym moved that the House should be cleared and the door locked, and then desired that seven members should be commissioned to retire and consult in

¹ Firth, *Cromwell*, p. 56.

The Fall of Strafford

order to draw up an accusation against the greatest subject in the Kingdom, the Earl of Strafford.

Digby was one of the seven members who spent no long time in debating before they gave Pym the satisfaction of sending a message to the Lords that the Committee had decided the case against the Lord Deputy of Ireland to be one of high treason.

Soon afterwards Digby was sent to the Lords to ask that a Committee of both Houses should sit to decide on the articles against Strafford, and the Lords agreed that it should presently meet in the Painted Chamber. By this time, Hyde says, Digby, "having got to the top of the Council of Pym and his friends began to look about him and take a full prospect of all that was to be seen," and he liked the prospect the less the more he saw of it. He had begun by calling Strafford "the Grand Apostate to the Commonwealth," and by quoting many imprudent expressions that he said he himself had heard Strafford use. But before long it became obvious that he did not bring the temper nor would bring the evidence that his party had hoped for. He spoke against the Bill,^{*} not only on matters of law, but on matters of fact, reminding the House of the variations in Sir Harry Vane's accusations, how sometimes Vane denied that the Earl of Strafford had used certain words, presently he had remembered some of them, and on a third examination he had even more damning remarks to report. The lively wit that had been so useful to Mr. Pym became rather inconvenient when it was turned against the serious Sir Harry Vane. But Digby could also take a judicial tone, and in spite of his jests he admitted freely that he held Strafford to be the most dangerous of ministers, the most unsupportable to free subjects.

"I do not say but the charges may represent him as a man worthy to die and perhaps worthier than many a traitor, I do not say but they may justly direct us to enact they shall be treason for the future. But God keep me from giving judgment of death on any man upon a law made *a posteriori*. Let the mark be set on the door where the plague is and they that will enter die. I believe his practices in themselves as high, as tyrannical, as any subjects ever entered on and the malignity of them largely aggravated by those rare abilities of his whereof God has given him the use and the devil the application. In one word I believe him

^{*} A barrister calls this "an unanswerable speech." *Fairfax Corr.*, Ed. G. W. Johnson, II. 82.

M.P. for Dorset

to be still that Grand Apostate to the Commonwealth who must not expect to be pardoned in this world till he be despatched to the other. And yet let me tell you, Mr. Speaker, my hand must not lie to that despatch, I protest as my conscience stands I had rather cut it off." He could not find any proof that the army Strafford had prepared in Ireland was intended to coerce England; he considered that it would be easy to draft a Bill to protect the country from Strafford without touching his life, and finally urged that the Houses ought to be judges not prosecutors.

But the Houses were prepared to be judge, jury, and executioner, and all that Digby gained was a motion that Mr. Digby should be asked to explain himself, and when he did so his former friends were very ill-pleased with the explanation, and he discovered so many particulars that had passed in the most private conferences of Pym and Hampden which he said at the time had merely perplexed him, that the whole party soon "had not less appetite to destroy him than the Earl of Strafford," and a paper posted in Old Palace Yard under the title "These are Straffordians, betrayers of their country," was headed by the name of George Digby.

To make this complication worse, an important paper for the prosecution vanished from the table in Mr. Pym's private chamber. Only three people had been in the room, of whom Digby was one. The Committee, which in all numbered eight people, made a solemn protestation before the House that they did not know what had become of it, and Digby "cheerfully joined with solemn and bitter execrations." But his execrations did not carry conviction to his former friends, who openly accused him of having stolen the paper. They themselves were disposed to believe all things as fair in politics as in love and war; it was not long before the virtuous Sir Harry Vane himself did the very thing of which they accused Digby. But though suspicion practically amounted to certainty, nothing was ever proved. A copy of the paper in Digby's handwriting was found long after among papers of his father's captured at Naseby, but that would only show that he had made notes for the use of his father—or possibly for the King.

But "with one displeasure after another, it came to pass," says Hyde, "that after being adored at Christmas, Digby was hated at Easter." Hyde explains that all his life long Digby had "a most wonderful facility to arrive at a greater pitch of being

beloved than any man I ever knew, and then would make the greatest haste to fall from that estimation into a gulf of prejudice and detestation. He had scarce a notable enemy in his life with whom he had not held a great friendship, and he bore the extremes very unconcernedly, imputing the first to his own virtue and the latter to the inconstancy of other men's humour and their envy and jealousy of his master faculties."

It is quite possible that the cold ferocity of the party with which he had joined startled and shocked Digby. It was going beyond legal forms and reasonable precautions, and when his "pathetical" speech against the Earl's condemnation was shortly met by Essex's "stone dead hath no fellow," it was plain that a wide gulf had opened between Digby and his former comrades. It is also possible that offers from the Court were attracting him to a party that really suited his character and taste far better than that of Pym and Hampden. Madame de Motteville says the Queen was in the habit of having Strafford's most dangerous enemies brought by one of her ladies up a backstairs, where Her Majesty would meet them carrying her own candle and endeavour to win them over by the most extravagant promises, but gained none of them but Digby. The story sounds quite possible both for the Queen and for Digby, but his change of front made little difference to the course of events, neither Digby nor his master could save the great Lord-Lieutenant. The two-handed engine struck, and Strafford was no more.

But Digby's position in the House among his former friends had been impossible, and it was a relief to those who loved him, as well as to those who hated, when he was rewarded for joining the Court party by being raised to the House of Lords as Baron Digby in June 1641.

Anthony Wood quaintly describes this as being "expelled from the House of Commons, both because he had called Goring a perjured person and because he was made a Baron and introduced to the Upper House!"

III

A KING'S MAN

THE NEW BARON DIGBY, we are told by Hyde, found a much more satisfactory position among the Lords than he had held among the friends he left in the Commons. In the Upper House "he was not looked on as a deserter from his party but as a prudent discoverer of their designs," and if only he would have been "content to sit still, the wisdom of the Lords and the large uncorrupted portion of the Commons might have been strong enough to prevent the calamities that befell."

Hyde then, and for long after, loved George Digby as he would have an adorable and exasperating son, but from the above remarks he seems to have imagined that his friend was important enough to have ruled the course of English history and to be responsible for the outbreak of the Civil War!

Be that as it may, Digby was not going to be an obedient member of any party. As Hyde laments, "from an idea of keeping power in his own hands," Digby was often most reserved with those he seemed to love best, and Hyde and Falkland found themselves too often shut out from his confidence. Hyde does not realise that it could not be otherwise when they still disapproved of his Court politics while he was throwing himself heart and soul into the service of his new masters.

Yet at first even his powers of fascination failed to make much impression at Court, his family had been too long in the Opposition and his friends and familiars were too unlike the royal circle. The King was slow to take to new friends, and, as Hyde tells us, "it was a melancholy season." "Many of those who had received most favours from their master forsook and betrayed him, people were afraid of their own friends, and the King knew not whom to trust." But before very long it became obvious that Digby was the very man for the hour.

"In such a conjunction, the vivacity of such a person could

The Expedition to Scotland

not but be very acceptable, who had a brain perpetually working and a courage so keen and fearless that he was ready to execute the same minute what he had resolved." A most delightful and dangerous servant for a master whose worst fault, Hyde says, was the excessive modesty which made him trust others' opinions rather than his own.

The first false step taken by Digby must have been the result of vanity. He could not conceive it possible that he should be heard without being admired, and deeply resented the small effect of his advocacy of Strafford. So, though that great man was dead and there was nothing to be gained by reawakening the debate, Digby's speech against the sentence appeared as a pamphlet, appealing to a larger audience than the unappreciative gentlemen who had sat in St. Stephen's Chapel. Unfortunately the larger audience was only indignant, while the House was scandalised, and voted that his speech should be publicly burnt, and that the King should be moved to give no further employment to Lord Digby. Lord Digby promptly disavowed the pamphlet, which he said had been printed without his knowledge, and his brothers Lewis Dyves and John Digby were then voted to be delinquents for their share in bringing it out.

This first move after joining the King's party had not proved a success, nor did any other good fortune make up for the failure. One by one the objects of the Commons were gained, one by one the King's most cherished powers were dragged from him. Even the journey which the King had long promised to make to Scotland was debated on with acrimony. However, at last Parliament agreed to adjourn till the middle of October, and in Scotland the King hoped "to refresh himself from the vexation the two Houses daily gave him." Alas! "We change our posture o'er and o'er, but cannot ease nor cheat our woe." The King's two former expeditions to the North had been unhappy, but the third brought misfortune to a climax. Hyde says he seemed to have gone to Scotland only to make a deed of gift of his Kingdom to Argyle and his party, and as though the troubles in Scotland and England were not enough, while the King was in Edinburgh came the news of the outbreak of the Rebellion in Ireland.

The King had intrigued with all parties in Ireland, and almost certainly the Queen had made imprudent promises to her co-religionists there. But there is no question that when the

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strong hand of Strafford was gone, confusion was bound to follow and needed no royal encouragement.

England immediately went wild with terror and anger, but instead of sending help to the distressed loyalists in Ireland, the Commons were carried away by a selfish terror of sharing their fate, demanded control of all the armed forces in England, and then proceeded to print a grand Remonstrance against everything that had been thought or done since the days of King James.

The debate on the Remonstrance was not expected to be very serious; Cromwell told Falkland that few would oppose it; but on the contrary it grew so furious that men laid their hands on their swords; darkness came on unnoticed, candles were brought, and not till two in the morning did the antagonists adjourn, thankful, as they grew calmer, that "they had not caught at each other's locks and sheathed their swords in each other's bowels."

This sort of debate was shocking to Hyde. He liked to have matters argued out with calm dignity, and for his own satisfaction drew up an answer to the Remonstrance. Lord Digby coming into his room where he sat alone with his books and papers began to discuss the situation and saw and read Hyde's paper. He was so delighted with it that he begged leave to show it to the King. Hyde positively refused, saying that would undo him with the House. But Digby never gave up a plan when he was once set on it, and in a few days he came again, and with all the graceful apologies he could make so well, confessed that he had told the King of Hyde's answer and conjured Hyde to lend him the paper, giving his loyal word that the whole matter should be secret. "Mr. Hyde, though he was very unsatisfied with what Lord Digby had done (whose affection he did not in any degree make question of, but did not like his over activity), and as he doubted not that himself had given the occasion to the King to send these commands, . . . yet on the consideration that it might do the King much service, did deliver these papers," which were approved by the Council and published in the King's name.¹ In Professor Firth's words, "Whether the King had the better cause or not, thanks to Hyde he has the best of the controversy." The Remonstrance was presented to the King at Hampton Court, and

¹ *Life of Lord Clarendon*, p. 45.

Hyde is won to the King

after a few days he sent an answer ; but Hyde says the graciousness and temper of his words made no impression, and the whispers of discontent went on as before.

Still there were many members who were indignant at the way the King was treated, and the more moderate men, such as Falkland, Hyde, and Culpepper, began to draw away from the popular party, and were urged by Digby to come out openly on the King's side. Falkland had too much respect for Parliamentary Government and too little confidence in Digby to receive these overtures very warmly, but at last he was persuaded to accept the post of Secretary of State, and Culpepper became Chancellor. Falkland only agreed on the understanding that Hyde would attend to the formal part of his office for him. Hyde joyfully promised to do anything and everything to lighten his drudgery, for Hyde was a true hero-worshipper, and could not doubt that Falkland's idealism joined with Culpepper's shrewd common sense, Digby's brilliance, and it must be added, Mr. Hyde's capability, could not fail to put the King's affairs in a position of security. And this happy state of things would be entirely owing to Digby, who joyfully acted as go-between, urging the King and persuading his friends, till he had gained them over to the royal service. "He had in truth so great an esteem of them that he did very frequently upon conference together depart from his own inclinations and opinions and concurred in theirs, and very few men of such great parts were upon all occasions more counselable than he, so that he would be seldom in danger of running into great errors if he would . . . expose all his thoughts . . . nor was he uninclinable by nature to such an entire communication." But his fatal infirmity was that he often thought difficult things very easy, and also, after he had talked matters over and given up all his own plans, if it struck him that there was a chance to do some brilliant action he would rush into it without warning the friends with whom he had just agreed on a policy.

But the position the four friends had to face was indeed no easy one. Not only were both the Houses full of complaints, but the City which had welcomed the King with enthusiasm on his return from Scotland and feasted him at the Guildhall (when Lord Digby was in attendance) was now seething with discontent. The City mob assembled daily unreprieved at the doors of the

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Commons, and the Commons seemed well pleased by these boisterous supporters.

In this state of tension, when it was important to give the angry party no new ground of complaint, Digby's "volatile and unquiet spirit" started a fresh grievance. He saw, what was very obvious, that the Tower, which combined the functions of Mint, Arsenal, State Prison, and Royal Fortress, ought to be in loyal hands, and it struck him that his stepbrother, Lewis Dyves, would be a much more satisfactory Lieutenant of the Tower than Sir William Balfour, for whom the King had no liking, and who was believed to be unpopular in the country; without further consideration Balfour was induced to resign, whereupon a storm of indignation arose from the Commons, who suddenly discovered that he was a most excellent and trustworthy person! Luckily Dyves was out of town and so had not got the post, but Digby had a happy thought that such a compliment might make a certain Colonel Lunsford, of whom he knew little, into a useful ally.

This was more than even the Lords could stand, and although they refused to join the Commons in a public protest, they privately begged the King to appoint a more suitable person. Lunsford resigned and Sir John Byron was appointed, which did not please the Commons very well, except in so far as it showed the King's plans could be altered if they made enough commotion. And so Lord Digby's second move failed.

Meantime the King was far from forgetting or forgiving all that he had endured in Scotland, and deeply resented the support the Scots had received from the English Parliament. Therefore at his command Lord Kimbolton and five members of the Commons who had written sympathetic letters to the Scottish leaders were impeached by the Attorney-General in the House of Lords. The Lords were alarmed, but waited to know the will of the Commons, who merely returned a message that the members should be forthcoming as soon as a legal charge was preferred against them, and made an order that if any member was meddled with without the order of the House, it should be lawful for him to resist and for any person to assist him, according to the privileges of Parliament. Clarendon does not think that even yet the King's affairs were in need of desperate remedies, but the Queen was furious, and Digby supported her in her entreaty to the King to go and pull those rascals out by the ears.

The Five Members

This unhappy advice was to Hyde's legal mind "the most visible introduction to all the misery that followed."

We all know what happened, how the King entered the House of Commons, and standing before the royal chair looked round, saying, "I see that my birds have fled," and the indignant members raised the cry of "Privilege," hardly waiting for the King to leave before adjourning in great disorder.

Meantime Digby in the House of Lords was to do his part by moving for the commitment of Lord Kimbolton ; but before he could rise, news of what had happened came from the Commons, and he sat silent and amazed by the spirit he had raised. After a few minutes he realised that the first thing to do was to get quickly and quietly out of the place, and with his usual audacity he whispered to Lord Kimbolton himself "that the King had been very mischievously advised, and it would go hard, but he would know from whence that council had proceeded."

He did go, but it was to urge the King to close the seaports and allow him to take half a dozen gentlemen and Colonel Lunsford and fetch the fugitive members from their refuge in the City ! This wild proposal was too much even for the King, "who liked not such enterprises."

It is amusing to speculate what might have been the results of *L'audace, toujours l'audace* if the audacity had but been carried out with secrecy and promptitude ! But secrecy was the one thing impossible to secure in the Stuart Court, and not only was Digby's wild scheme forbidden, but whether Will Murray let it out or Digby's own restless vanity betrayed him, it was not long before every one knew who had given this mischievous advice to the King, and Digby's horrified former colleagues never forgot or forgave. "Before, he had had fewer true friends than he deserved, and had now almost the whole nation his enemy, being the most universally odious of any man in it." *

Yet even now he did not realise how heartily he was hated till a very small matter opened his eyes. The King had retired to Hampton Court to be out of the way of the London disturbances, and from there one day in January 1642 Lord Digby was sent by the King to carry pay to certain disbanded officers at Kingston-on-Thames. Anthony Wood,² says he went in a coach with six horses, accompanied by a friend in another coach and a servant

* Clarendon S.P. III.

² Wood, *Ath.*, III 1161.

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riding by him. But the friend happened to be the Colonel Lunsford whom Digby had tried to make Governor of the Tower, not a person in very good odour, while since Digby's wild proposal to kidnap the five members nothing was thought too crazy for him to attempt, and at once a rumour was circulated that he had appeared in arms, that Kingston was packed with horse, and that disbanded officers had joined him to a number of 200 with two cartloads of ammunition, "and they have pistols," and were believed to be on their way to Portsmouth!¹ The Sheriff and trained bands were called out, Lunsford was committed to the Tower, and Digby was ordered to appear in his place in the House of Lords and explain himself.

Then at last Digby believed that the country did not appreciate him and saw it was time to get out of the way.

He was given a pass by the King and went down to Deal on the 16th of January. There he dined with Sir John Pennington, the Admiral, on his ship, and then went on to one of the despatch boats, *The Lion's Whelp*, saying that he had the King's commands to go beyond seas. But before he could sail, for some reason or other, he turned back, went to Canterbury, where the truth about his flight was already known, and the Mayor stopped him. But he protested that he was on his way to obey the summons from Parliament, and so got away, and secretly back to Deal, where he woke up Admiral Pennington in his bed, showed him the pass signed by the King's own hand, and so got off to Holland.

He established himself at Middleborough, where at the "Sign of the Golden Fleece" he remained under the transparent disguise of "the Baron of Sherborne." He wrote from thence to Dyves saying, "If the King declare himself and retire to a safe place I shall be able to wait upon him from hence as well as out of any part of England. Besides this I found all the ports so strict that if I had not taken the opportunity of Sir John Pennington's forwardness in the King's service it would have been impossible for me to have gotten away at any other time."

This letter unluckily was intercepted, as was also one to the Queen which spoke of her journey with the Princess Mary to Holland as "having withdrawn from a country unworthy of her."

¹ Rushworth. III. vi. 502.

Digby's Apology

About this time also a letter was written to Digby from York by Thomas Elliot, telling him that English affairs were in a good condition, so long as they were not undone by hearkening to an accommodation; "there's nothing else can hurt us, which I fear the King is too much inclined to, but I hope what he shall receive from the Queen will make him so resolved that nothing but a satisfaction equal to the injuries he hath received will make him quit the advantage he hath."

As luck would have it all these compromising letters were intercepted and were read aloud before Parliament in May 1642. Yet having nothing else to do Digby went on corresponding very busily with England without giving a thought to the probability that his letters would be intercepted. And so to the former counts against him were added the letters he wrote to his brother and to the Queen wishing the King were in Holland and advising His Majesty to declare himself and retire to a place of strength where he might avow and protect his servants, as he had already had to leave London "to save the cavaliers from being trampled in the dust!" This letter Digby afterwards declared was one of mere compliment, but the Houses considered it a "traitorous conception and impeached the writer of High Treason, February 26, 1642."¹

A year later Digby published his *Apology* in an admirable pamphlet, simple and eloquent, which, however, probably few read and fewer believed.

He admits, "it may be wondered that after well nigh a year's groaning under the most unsupportable burden of public displeasure and censure I should now consider myself so much as in a general calamity to make an apology to the world." But at least he desires that his misfortunes may be distinguished from his faults. "I was as unacquainted with action as with envy and having kept more company with books than men . . . had as little ambition as merit to improve my condition." He observed that his unexampled favour had begun to decline in the first debate on episcopacy, as he also then observed no three men agreed in what reforms they desired. Then during Strafford's trial some unlucky expressions drew on him great malignity, and he had found his speech had been so incorrectly reported that Sir Lewis Dyves heard a respectable citizen say he deserved to be torn in

¹ Rushworth.

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pieces for having given it ! Therefore Sir Lewis asked for a correct copy, which he printed on his own authority. The speech had not been censured when delivered in the House, why was it now a crime ?

Why was he accused of heading the rebels in Ireland, of making war-like preparations at Sherborne, of levying war at Kingston ! When the rabble had obliged the King for his own safety to retire to Hampton Court, many soldiers and officers who were in London awaiting their arrears waited on His Majesty, and there being no room for them at Hampton went to Kingston. There His Majesty had sent Digby to express his good acceptance of their services, going in a coach with six hired horses with one man in the coach and one riding, and returned to Hampton Court that night. To his amazement the Sheriffs of several counties were ordered by the Houses to raise forces and take him, so he felt he was too unfortunate to remain in England and fled.

The letters which had been intercepted were most innocent and obvious remarks only intended for his brother's ear, or conventional compliments, as when he told the Queen she was leaving a country not worthy of her, for it was usual to tell a lady that any country would be unworthy of her !¹

An "Answer" to the Apology was instantly issued as dull and lengthy as Digby's pamphlet is witty and graceful. But alas ! public opinion endorsed the dull tract, and the dislike and fear of Digby grew to quite incredible heights.

¹ The Lord George Digby's apology for himself, published the 4th of January, 1642-3, Pamphlet, Bodleian.

IV

THE ROMANCE OF WAR, 1641-3

DIGBY REMAINED in Holland till he heard the King was safely out of reach of London. Then he could be "content to sit still" no longer, but came over in disguise to York, where he lay in hiding, only meeting His Majesty at night, and doubtless thoroughly enjoying the romantic situation, all the more so that his devoted mentor Hyde was still in London, sending galloping messengers to the King daily, but unable to torment Digby with wise advice.

The point of interest that spring was Hull, where was stored the large supply of arms which loyal followers had presented to the King for his use in the Scots war. Parliament therefore had no just claim to them, but questions of legality counted for less every day, and the Houses hurried off Sir John Hotham to keep Hull and its Arsenal safe for Parliament. The King with great dignity sent his nephew the Elector and the little Duke of York to visit Hotham and keep up at least the appearance of royal authority. Soon after the King himself followed, and on the news of his approach the Mayor and citizens set about preparations for a proper reception, when to every one's amazement Hotham raised the drawbridge, shut the gates, and informed the King he could not be admitted. The Elector and the little Prince were allowed to leave, and the King could only retire deeply insulted.

It has been well said, if Rupert had been in Hull instead of his elder brother, the story of the Northern Campaign might have been a very different one. But the Elector's anxiety was to keep well with both sides so as to make sure that whichever was in power his own income would be paid. *

Several of the King's friends who knew they were unpopular with the Parliament decided to join Digby when he left for

* Warburton, *Prince Rupert*, I. 263.

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Holland, and wait there till the King could find employment for them; so Wilmot, Berkeley and others set sail with Digby for the Hague to put themselves at the disposal of the Queen, who was now in Holland with her daughter, the bride of the Prince of Orange. On the voyage they met the ship *Providence*, sent by the Queen with arms and ammunition for the King's use, when three of the party decided to return to England in her, leaving Colonel Ashburnham and Lord Digby to go on to Holland. But they had been so long in discussing their plans that the Parliament ships that were in chase of the *Providence* had time to come up; the captain of the *Providence* fortunately knew the coast well, and saved his cargo by running his ship ashore in a safe creek near Burlington; but his fly-boat, in which were Digby and Ashburnham, was taken, and they were both carried prisoners to Hull. Ashburnham was a valuable prisoner, as he was "in great umbrage with the Parliament,"¹ and as, unluckily, Hotham knew him well, he had no chance of escape, although, as they had always been good friends, the Governor received him with much civility.

Digby's position was very different, for Hotham was his avowed enemy; but he disguised himself very well as a Frenchman and shaved his moustache and beard, so his captors had no suspicion who he might be, and luckily he was so seasick that he kept down in the hold till they reached Hull, and so had time to destroy all his incriminating papers, and when he landed he still appeared to be so ill that he easily got leave to be sent under guard to "some obscure corner for repose."

But all the same his position was pretty desperate. It was hardly possible that one of the sailors would not let out who he really was, and he knew he was so odious to the Parliament that once in their hands there would not be much chance for his life.

It hardly needed such a stimulus to set Digby's ingenuity to work, and he soon recovered sufficiently from his seasickness to call his guard and tell him in broken English that he had important secrets to confide to the Governor if he might see him in private. Hotham spoke French well and sent for the prisoner, but instead of seeing him in secret, received him in a large room full of company, which unfortunately included some gentlemen just

¹ Clarendon, *Gl. C.W.*, I. 791.

The Adventure to Hull

returned from France. Digby put a bold face on it and explained with great fluency how much military service he had seen and how he was now on his way to offer his sword to the King, and for a while answered the questions of the different gentlemen very readily. But they soon began to ask too much, and he again urged the Governor to let him speak to him in private, as he could not tell his information to all the company. Hotham was a nervous man, rather afraid for the sake of his own safety to trust himself with a stranger, and afraid also of arousing suspicion if he went into another room, for his eldest son was in the place practically as a spy over him. So he drew the prisoner into the deep recess of a window out of earshot of the others, and then Digby quietly asked him in English if he knew him.

The Governor, surprised, answered, "No."

"Then," said Digby, "I shall try whether I know Sir John Hotham and whether he be in truth the same man of honour I have always taken him to be," and then told who he was, adding that he hoped Hotham was too much of a gentleman to deliver him up to the fury of his implacable enemies. Poor Hotham was naturally aghast, and in terror lest the rest of the company should guess that something serious was afoot he hurriedly assured Digby that he should find him to be the man he thought him, and that he would contrive a better chance of talking with him, begging him meanwhile to content himself with the poor accommodation he had. So, not to excite suspicion, he called the guard to take away the prisoner and keep a strict watch on him and returned to the company, passing off his obvious agitation by telling them the Frenchman was a shrewd fellow and had told him more of the Queen's designs than he had suspected, and he should send a despatch to Parliament as soon as he had more information from him.

By this time Digby was himself again, and was determined not to go back to the King empty-handed. He saw no reason why he should not only save his own life and that of his companion, but also put Hull and its arsenal into the royal hands. This was, indeed, one of Digby's most astonishing adventures, for Hotham was neither a merciful nor a generous man, but by playing on his fears, his avarice, and his ambition, Digby had so impressed him that he was disposed to rise to the height of nobility that his prisoner had demanded of him.

The Romance of War, 1641-3

He sent for Digby next day when he was alone and begged him to consider in what way it would be possible to carry out his plans, for he was resolved not to deceive the trust he had put in him. He lamented bitterly that he could trust no man, least of all his own son, and "the misfortunes of the times that had driven him to take the wrong side," and how he was assured the King would hang him if he got him.

Digby was sympathy personified. He warned Hotham that the King would quickly have subdued all his enemies, as all the crowned heads in Europe were coming to his help, but what would not be the honour and glory of the man who would prevent such a horrible conflict! King and people would join in honouring and rewarding him, and his name would be handed down to posterity as the preserver of the people. In short, if he delivered up Hull, peace was certain, and he would have laid the foundation of a magnificent position.

Hotham grew more and more agitated. The bait Digby dangled so skilfully was tempting, yet the risks were overwhelming. At last between them they concocted a plan. After Hotham had shut the gates in the very face of the King it was hardly possible for him to simply send word that His Majesty might come in after all; and even if he did send, the officers of the garrison and his own son would prevent the surrender. But if the King would appear in arms, were it but with one regiment to give a decent excuse for surrender, the gates should immediately be thrown open. And so he hurried off the supposed Frenchman to carry letters, it was given out, to friends in York.

After Digby had spoken to the King, it was decided that he should throw off his disguise and make believe to have come from Holland with the ammunition. The King then settled to move nearer to Hull, and took up his quarters at Beverley, while Digby once more became a Frenchman and hurried back to put his head in the lion's mouth. He found Hotham much depressed. Fresh officers under Meldrum had arrived from Parliament, his son was becoming suspicious, and he despaired of being able to carry out his designs. So finally he sent Ashburnham and Digby away in safety, begging them to carry his expressions of dutiful loyalty to the King. Unlucky Hotham! He wanted to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds. He escaped hanging by the King, but in time Parliament got hold of the story,

The Siege of Sherborne

and after dreadful scenes of mutual recrimination and betrayal both he and his son lost their heads.

For a while the King moved from one place to another in the North, keeping up the appearance of merely dignified Royal progresses, and trying to enlist the sympathies of the country magnates. But in Yorkshire Fairfax had too much influence, and the royal forces turned south, and at last formally raised the Royal Standard at Nottingham on August 22nd, Nottingham being, in Hyde's opinion, about the last place in England to have chosen for the rendezvous.

While war was being talked of in the North, it had actually broken out in Digby's own county, and his own home was threatened. Lord Hertford, one of the last representatives of the Tudor line, had gone to raise troops in his own county, accompanied by John Digby, Sir Ralph Hopton, Lunsford, and a few more. John Digby with some hundred volunteer gentlemen charged and dispersed above six hundred foot of the Parliament men, but the local yeomen and middle classes were so disaffected that Hertford found it best to retire from Wells, where he was doing no good, and settled his headquarters at Sherborne, apparently occupying both the dismantled Castle and the New Castle or Lodge, where Lady Digby still remained.

Her brother, the Earl of Bedford, with Hollis and an experienced officer, Charles Essex, advanced from Bristol with an army of 7,000 foot, eight troop of horse, and four cannon. And fortunate it was for the King, says Hyde, that they amused themselves at Sherborne instead of striking north to Nottingham, where the King had hardly a man to protect him.

Hertford manned Sherborne Castle with his small body of foot, while his horse under Hopton and Berkeley defended the outskirts of the town so well that Bedford had to encamp almost a mile out in the open fields, on a spot still known as Bedford's Castle. His artillery did some execution, but in all the skirmishes Hopton's men came off victorious, and Hertford's guns, small though they were, succeeded in throwing Bedford's camp into such panic, that he actually sent the remarkable offer to the Castle that he should retire if Hertford would promise he should not be molested. Hertford very naturally replied, "They came upon their own council and might get off as they could," which they did, marching off towards Yeovil, with their rear harassed by the

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Royalist troops. Bedford vindicated his action in raising the siege by saying the Castle was too strong for him and his raw troops were deserting, also they were extremely cold, and had had four nights without sleep, and altogether he decided the amateur military excursion had best be brought to a conclusion.

It is no wonder that Martin attacked Bedford in Parliament for his failure, but Hollis defended the Earl, declaring he had done as much as was possible. The retreat is, however, so little creditable to the Parliamentarians as to make the local legend the best explanation. It is said Bedford sent a message to Lady Digby on his arrival begging her to leave the Lodge, as he had orders to demolish it. She immediately mounted her horse and rode to her brother's camp, where she told him plainly, "if he persisted in his resolution he would find his sister's bones buried in the ruins." One resolute woman was more than a match for a rather half-hearted General, and Bedford withdrew. He was not enthusiastic over the Parliamentary cause, and it has been said if he had been offered more compliments by the King he would have thrown in his lot with the Royalists.¹

We hear little of George Digby for a few months after his amazing escape from Hull. We only know that as Hyde and Falkland were at the King's headquarters, the triumvirate of friends were happy together, and Lady Digby seems soon to have joined her husband in Oxford.

But a stronger man than any of the three friends had now come to the King's side, and Rupert's distaste for the gentlemen who surrounded his uncle was shown quickly and unmistakably. After his training in the German camps of the Thirty Years' War, it is hardly surprising that the haughty young Prince should be impatient with Digby's affectations and Hyde's pernickity legalisms, but the man who could insult Falkland was as plainly out of touch with England as was the Queen with her training among French Court intrigues; even the King remembered too often that he was a Stuart and looked towards Scotland, so that England, slighted by Scotland, Germany, and France, at last took her own terrible reckoning.

Digby, however, was too experienced a courtier to let Rupert bring things to an open quarrel, and took the earliest opportunity

¹ *Civil War in Dorset*, Bazley, p. 49.

to write the Prince one of those elaborate letters of explanation on which he prided himself.

The Mr. O'Neill, he mentions, was the last representative of the chiefs of South Claneboye. In spite of his father having muddled away his lands, in O'Neill's own words, through his "weakness and inexperience in the laws of the Kingdom" and the canniness of his Scots neighbours, Daniel O'Neill was rich and in good position and married the Countess of Chesterfield.¹

He was a soldier of experience, as in sporting fashion he used to spend his summers campaigning in the Low Countries, though he returned to the English Court for the winters.

He was a Protestant, and Hyde tells us "a great observer of men, humorous and dextrous in compliance when he found it useful," and also, though of Irish blood, "in subtlety and understanding much superior to the whole nation of the Irish." He had also a "natural address that made him acceptable in the best company," and he had suffered imprisonment for his faithfulness to the King, and would probably have forfeited his life if he had not managed to escape from the Tower disguised as a lady. It was a curious piece of bad luck that such a universal favourite could not win the liking of either the King or Rupert, and all Digby's influence, supported by that of the Queen herself, could not induce Charles to make him a gentleman of the bedchamber, the one position of which O'Neill was ambitious. In spite of Rupert's dislike, O'Neill served under him as Lieut.-Colonel of Horse, and as the Irishman was too experienced a man of the world to engage in unnecessary squabbles, he did his best to encourage Digby to hide his feelings and do the civil thing by Rupert.

Digby wrote as follows :

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR HIGHNESS,

I am told by Mr. O'Neill that your Highness hath not so right an understanding of me as my affection to your person and service made me hope. 'Tis true, sir, that to persons as much above me as you are, my nature is not apt to those insinuations and *recherches* which others, perhaps, that love thee much less, are dextrous and industrious in; but this I will say to your Highness, with confidence and truth, that ever since I have had the honour to know you, I have not omitted any occasion wherein I thought I might either serve your Highness or express how much I honoured you, of which I am sure I have the greatest and best

¹ *Two Centuries of Life in Dorset*, J. Stevenson, p. 32.

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witnesses. I am told likewise that your Highness takes ill some expressions of mine concerning you to a person whom your Highness esteems and I honour much. You will not think it fit for me to discourse upon that subject in a letter, and therefore I will refer the enlargement to Mr. O'Neill. But this much I assure your Highness that if I have deserved well in anything, it hath been of your Highness even towards that person, and in that very expression, being wholly used in this sense, to tell that party that where there was a friendship of honour with so gallant a Prince as yourself, *les petits gens* should be kept at a greater distance, as I am sure the party will have the nobleness to avow, in case you think it worthy of reviving. In the meantime I shall study to serve your Highness with affection and industry in all things wherein you shall think me worthy your trust. If these professions were not very real I would not have troubled neither your Highness nor myself with them, for I have no other end upon you but this, that believing you a gallant and generous Prince I should esteem myself happy to have with you the place of

Your Highness' most affectionate
Humble servant,
GEORGE DIGBY.¹

This letter seems to have had its effect, for Digby was with the Prince at his brilliant little action of Powyke Bridge. The King then was at Shrewsbury, collecting men and money, while Rupert was sent off with a body of horse to cover Worcester from the advance of the Parliament forces under Essex. He found Worcester itself practically indefensible, and so merely halted his forces to rest in a meadow outside the walls. Suddenly a movement was seen on the Pershore road, and almost before the Royalists realised it, the enemy was on them in numbers quite three to one. The Prince's men sprang to horse, Rupert's charge was as usual resistless, half the enemy were driven into the river, their Colonel killed, and the rest were hunted by the victorious Royalists back to the very gates of Pershore. Sir Lewis Dyves was wounded, but Digby's usual luck brought him through unscathed.

In spite of the success of this skirmish, Rupert thought it better to fall back by Ludlow and rejoin the King; then after ensuring the safety of Chester, Charles definitely set off on his march to London, keeping away from the enclosed meadows and orchards and following the high open ground along the backbone of England. He spent the night near Wolverhampton undis-

¹ "10 7 bris at Nottingham." 1642, Warb., I. 368.

turbed, but Digby in command of three regiments of foot and some horse came there upon Hollis and was worsted after some sharp fighting.¹

Many of the gentlemen who now followed the King had put aside their political preferences when the Crown itself was in danger. Sunderland, Falkland, Verney were not blind partisans, but Digby had left the days of the member for Dorset far behind and marched gaily on in command of his Infantry Brigade with no anxieties about ideals of reconstruction or theories of Government.

At Birmingham the King was entertained by Sir Thomas Holt at Aston Hall, and so they marched on southward till they reached the slopes of Edge Hill. The science of scouting was still so imperfect that, although Digby went forward with 400 horse to reconnoitre, no one had any notion of the nearness of the enemy till Rupert's quarter-master absolutely ran into the arms of Essex's officers at Wormleighton on the 23rd of October.

The next morning a council of war was held and the usual unhappy differences of opinion as usual wrecked the chances of success. The veteran Lindsay declined to act while he was allowed no authority, and Rupert's dashing tactics won and lost the day. Digby with Carnarvon and Wilmot was stationed on the left, and there also, as a volunteer, was Falkland, whose quarrel with Rupert was too bitter to allow him to serve in the Prince's troop. Hyde was put in the rear in charge of the royal children.

We all know the story of Edge Hill : how Rupert's magnificent charge swept away the Roundheads, how Digby, who should have been holding back his men as a reserve, forgot his part and dashed on with the rest of the horse, leaving the Infantry so unsupported that the Parliament horse rode through and through them. By evening the commanders of either side believed themselves defeated ; Essex drew off his forces, and the King was at least left master of the field of battle.

No sooner was Essex known to be in retreat than Rupert was after him, capturing his rearguard and baggage, and, most important of all, his cabinet of correspondence.

Instead of immediately advancing on London, the King moved slowly on towards Oxford. Doubtless it was prudent to make sure of the city which he was to make his headquarters throughout

¹ Warb., II. 4.

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the war, and which commanded the roads from London to the west. Also it was diplomatic to allow the Londoners time to take in the circumstances of Essex's inglorious retreat and let the peace party comment on it. But it is also probable that the King as well as his more sober councillors shrank from entering his own capital as an armed conqueror, and old Lord Bristol warned him openly that a hurried advance must not be risked or Rupert would certainly fire the city.¹ War was still a horrible and unnatural thing to English gentlemen, and they would have dearly liked to wage it in velvet gloves.

However, the halt at Oxford was a short one, and on the 12th of November Rupert was able to exhibit his fashion of fighting by sacking and burning Brentford, which performance had the usual effect of making the Londoners extremely angry and thoroughly determined to resist to the uttermost. The King then realised that he was not strong enough to meet the London Trained Bands under Skippon, and reluctantly drew his forces back to Oxford. Hyde considered that the King ought never to have advanced at all, but should have halted in a dignified manner at Oxford or Reading and waited for the submission of the Parliamentary leaders, for Hyde still clung to the belief that such blessed words as "constitution," "fundamental laws" and "just prerogative," if said sufficiently often, would paralyse all opposition. But Hyde's constitutionalism could no more work miracles than could Digby's "apologies." Pym went on his grim way and London remained impenitent.

Oxford now became the royal headquarters, and its safety was secured by garrisons placed round all the borders of the county. Dyves was with Prince Rupert's regiment at Abingdon, the Prince himself took Cirencester, and although it was now December, "when his tired and almost naked soldiers" might expect rest, Wilmot made a dash on Marlborough and sacked the town thoroughly. The Roundhead garrison, however, seem to have got away, for a few nights after they gave a disagreeable surprise to Lord Digby and some ladies who were at Wantage under the protection of three regiments of horse. Digby and some of the ladies escaped, but Lady Jermyn with others and about fifty men were captured.² Another small contretemps happened when Digby, under Lord Hertford, tried to get into Somerset,

¹ Warb., I. 39.

² Money *Two Battles of Newbury*, p. 30.

for the Parliament men made better speed and were at Sherborne before him, where they managed to dig up five thousand pounds worth of plate that Lord Bristol had left there buried. Digby then went off in the other direction on an expedition to the Welsh border to keep Waller busy lest he should interrupt the King's communication with the western loyalists.

It was during this winter that the King knighted "Ned Hyde" and made him Chancellor of the Exchequer. This was not a very important post, for as Professor Firth writes, "just then there was very little in the Exchequer," but it gave Hyde a seat in the Council. The post really came to him through his friends, for Culpepper, who for all his virtues was of a grasping nature, wished to double the parts of Master of the Rolls and Chancellor. When Falkland and Digby found this out they were so indignant and expostulated so warmly that the King observed their agitation and Hyde got the prize, such as it was.

With springtide the hopes in Oxford began to blossom like the college orchards, and in March the Queen landed with arms and ammunition in the North, where Newcastle was already busy routing the Fairfaxes. In order to keep open the communications for Her Majesty, Rupert moved northward in April, and Digby was with him when he reached Birmingham and advanced to the siege of Lichfield.¹ It was now some time since

Fanatic Brooke
The fair Cathedral spoiled and took,

and Gell had rivalled the barbarities of a Hun invader. Now the present Governor, Colonel Rowswell or Russell, had made the Close and remains of the Cathedral into a very strong fortress, with a moat and walls so thick that no battery could make any impression on them. Rupert with scientific thoroughness sent to Cannock Chase close by for colliers, who drained the moat and mined the wall; but even in a siege Digby had no use for miners or foot-soldiers, he jumped his horse over the moat and took his cavalry in across the ruined wall in steeplechase fashion. But although he got inside the fortification, he naturally could not hold his position, and was brought off by his men, it was said, by a sort of miracle, mud up to his middle and shot through the thigh, and after all Rupert was not impressed by the performance.

¹ Cl., *Gt. Reb.*, II. 351.

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But historians did not forget his exploits. When Dean Higgs wrote his account of the siege of his Cathedral, he mentions "Baron Digby, most honourable alike in the arts of peace and war, so that it were doubtful whether his pen or his sword were the sharper."

The Dean also tells what Clarendon omits, that the foot-soldiers were guided into the Close by the subchanter Mr. Turnpenny, but alas ! they fell to plundering, and after desperate resistance were driven back. Next morning, however, the enemy surrendered, and Rupert entered the Close and "wept a long, a very long time over the filth and ruin of the Cathedral."

Meantime, Digby sore in mind and body, as soon as he could be moved returned to Oxford, where he was at least sure of proper appreciation, and for the time relinquished any command.

Although Rupert became master of Lichfield, he was unable to remain in the Midlands, for he was summoned back to Oxford to meet the advance of Essex, who, dilatory as he was, began to feel the spring was "the time when kings go to war." On the whole, Essex's campaign was a success, for he gained Reading, though Chalgrove Field was won by the Royalists, and Hampden fell there. Digby, as soon as he had recovered his health, started again for the North. In July he was in the Queen's army¹ writing to Nicholas about the Parliamentary forces at Leicester and Coventry. Rupert met the Queen at Stratford-on-Avon on the 11th of the month, and the King awaited her on Edge Hill on the 13th. Oxford was in triumph, for the arrival of the Queen meant that the Midlands were in the King's hands and the North was coming in fast. She also was met by the news of further successes, that Hopton was victor all over the West, at Stratton, Lansdown, and Roundway Down, and the result of those victories was the capitulation of Bristol on the 26th of July.

There had been a bold attempt to win Bristol four months earlier, but the plot for its surrender was betrayed, and as a contemporary pamphlet triumphantly records, that² "Prince Rupert and Lord Digby, sons of Belial, and others of that accursed crew" had failed ignominiously, and their friends had been hanged. But after the crowning victories of Hopton, it did not take Rupert long to make himself master of the fair capital of the West.

¹ Warb., II. 225.

² *Ibid.*, II. 141.

Siege of Gloster

And then the inevitable doom of the Royal cause fell on the victors, and the usual senseless squabbles nullified the advantages gained. Prince Maurice was jealous of Hertford, the Queen was jealous of Rupert, every one was busy over his own miserable spites and ambitions. The semi-royal Marquis of Hertford, great-nephew of Lady Jane Grey and widower of Lady Arabella Stuart, and the chivalrous Hopton, were persistently elbowed out of the way, and Rupert claimed Bristol for himself. What wonder that Falkland, heartbroken, could only "ingeminate Peace !"

More quarrels arose over the next move of the King's forces. Instead of his triumphant army marching straight on London, what Warburton calls "the fatal vanity of not leaving an enemy's standard flying in their rear," led them aside to Gloster. To plagiarise a saying of Disraeli's "the key of Gloster and of the kingdom was in London." But it must be remembered that neither side at that time had a regular army, and the county militias thought first of defending their own homes, so that the men under Newcastle had refused to march south while Hull was untaken, and the western armies could think no city so important as Plymouth or Exeter. The royal generals now imagined that the reduction of the Puritan city of Gloster would satisfy the loyalists of the county, and would only delay their march for a few days, while it made the road to Wales secure.

But the Puritans were stout and the Royal Army wasted precious time by the Severn, until at last Essex bestirred himself and appeared on the scene, and the King's forces hurriedly raised the siege and departed.

Essex having succeeded so far, marched all night up the Cotswolds to Cirencester in order to cut the King off from Oxford and London. At Cirencester he surprised three hundred horse and a large quantity of provisions, and then started back towards London. When the King, who was further up the valley at Sudeley Castle, learned what had happened, he hurried up the hills after Essex in his turn, hoping to catch him before he could reach the safety of London, and the two armies raced each other over the high bare tableland of the Cotswolds. The King with the main army passed Burford and spent the night in the pretty wooded village of Alvescote at the house of Lady Ashcombe. From there he sent Digby on to Rupert asking directions for the next day's

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march. "As we look at the map here, supposing that Essex points to Reading, we conclude that Wantage will be the apter place" for a rendezvous.¹

Rupert, in an astonishing forced march, had taken a short cut through Lechlade and was at Farringdon, close on the heels of Essex, who had only got as far as Swindon; then at Albourne Chase, near Chisledon, Rupert with his advanced guard of horse and some French gentlemen (who ought to have been neutral) caught up with the enemy and charged right in on them. Jermyn, riding with a French gentlemen on one hand and Digby on the other, came to close quarters. The Roundhead officer opposite to them hesitated for a moment which of the gentlemen he should fire at and changed his aim at the last, firing his pistol right in Digby's face. Hyde says "this may be reckoned one of those escapes of which that gallant person hath passed a greater number in the course of his life than any man I know," for the bullet seems to have rolled from the barrel and Digby was merely powder burnt, though temporarily half blinded. His own pistol missed fire, but Jermyn ran their opponent through the body. And then Essex's men charged so hotly from the rear that Jermyn could only cut his way out, leaving his French comrade De Vieuxville dead. Digby, stunned and blinded, was brought off by a charge from Rupert in which the Prince's horse was shot under him. Rupert had at least succeeded in forcing Essex off the direct road to Reading.

By this time the King had got beyond Wantage, but Rupert did not wait for him. It was not the Prince's fashion to delay, even to be joined by the foot who were essential to a real victory. Essex's guard had occupied the little town of Newbury on the 19th of September, but the Prince cleared them out at a run, and they were obliged to camp in the open country, where the city-bred troops naturally suffered much from lack of food and shelter; but from a military point of view their position was excellent, screened by the woods between the rivers En and Kennet. Even Rupert now advised against an attack, but the younger cavaliers outdid their general in recklessness and charged without leave, so that the main body was obliged to support them.

In this wild dash up the hill against the immovable London Trained Bands, Falkland found the peace he had so long desired,

¹ Warb., II. 289.

First Battle of Newbury

and was discovered lying shot dead under a hawthorn hedge. The running fight continued all day, but at night the King's troops drew back, and Essex seized the chance of escape and hurried on to Reading, harassed so closely by Rupert that even Reading did not seem a sufficient refuge, and they made their best speed home to London, leaving Reading as well as Donnington Castle to be occupied by the King. And the end of the fighting was to leave both sides dissatisfied. Essex's men declared that Waller ought to have brought up troops from Windsor and rescued them, while on the King's side Byron and Hyde as usual found Rupert to blame, and asserted it was his haste which had destroyed the chance of a crowning victory.¹

¹ Cl. S.P., 1738. Money, *Two Battles of Newbury*. Digby's *True and Impartial Account*.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE, 1643-4

WHEN THE ROYAL CAUSE suffered the irreparable loss of Falkland, it was natural that one of the dead man's friends should take up his work.

The King, who appreciated and trusted Hyde, would have liked to make him Secretary of State, but the Queen had no particular liking for the outspoken Chancellor, and urged the King to give the post to Digby. Digby, however, had no mind to gain advancement at the expense of his best friend and refused, till Hyde himself persuaded him to take the post, urging that it required a knowledge of foreign politics and foreign languages in which he himself was quite wanting.

Digby threw himself with great industry into his new work, but long years afterwards Hyde doubted whether he really made a success of it, for the curious reason that he and Culpepper were so much superior to the rest of the Council in intellect and education that their influence over the King was inevitable and was resented by the Army members. The other reason for the failure was less exalted, from Digby's "excess of fancy." When every one believed that a question was decided and closed, he would often be struck by some new and brilliant idea, and would suddenly alter all the orders he had given, which alterations Hyde solemnly assures us "produced, or were thought to produce, many inconveniences."¹ No doubt they did, and drove the army leaders to the verge of distraction. Hyde felt if only Digby would have consulted more with his experienced old father, things would have gone more smoothly, but though Digby treated Lord Bristol with all affection and respect, he always preferred to go his own way.

It is unfortunate for us that Digby kept his "excess of fancy" for the Council, and that most of his letters which are preserved are as formal as any other State documents, and leave us far from the real Digby who fascinated and irritated his contemporaries.

¹ *Gr. Reb.*, II. 2722.

One of Digby's earliest moves in foreign diplomacy had been to send an invitation in concert with the Queen to those six French gentlemen whose spirit, as we have seen, proved too strong for their neutrality at Newbury. When the war first began, the accredited ambassador from France had remained in London, and if on any side, seemed disposed to favour the Parliament. So the Prince de Harcourt, Monsieur de Sabron, and these other gentlemen were invited to come over as a make-weight. Unluckily, they seem to have brought no proper letters of credit to London, and the Houses refused to receive them; but they were welcomed at the King's headquarters, where it was at once asserted that they brought promises that Cardinal Mazarin was going to send the King men and arms. Alas! these hopes came to nothing. The only result of the French mission was to give Hyde an admirable rod to hold over Digby whenever again he wove dreams of French intervention.

It appears, however, that Parliament had no special objection to Harcourt, but it declined to negotiate with any friends of the King as long as he refused to give the Houses the formal title of Parliament.¹ This was the real bar to any hope of agreement. Most members of the Council seem to have felt "What is in a name?" But Nicholas and the King persistently refused to admit the assembly at Westminster to be a Parliament.

Yet negotiations of a sort went on through the winter of 1643-4, and alas! so did the squabbles in Oxford. Contemporary letters make one feel as if the King were trying to stand steady on a quicksand, no two grains of which could be trusted to stick together. In the spring Digby had to do his best to make peace between George Goring and Sir John Berkeley, a blustering swashbuckler who was long afterwards the favourite companion of the young Duke of York, and who won an unsavoury reputation by being ready to swear away Anne Hyde's character. Digby writes very tactfully to Berkeley confessing himself much troubled by Berkeley's harshness towards General Goring, "to whom I confess to be a particular friend," suggests it would be so much better to "have a sense of one another's merits instead of sharp memories for each other's errors," and finally touches delicately on an incident which was either mutiny or cowardice, gently regretting that two of Berkeley's officers had been forced to retire into

¹ *Gt. C.W.*, I. 271.

The Secretary of State, 1643-4

garrison when their support of Goring in the field was absolutely necessary to the King's cause.¹

In spite of squabbles, life in Oxford was as brilliant as the presence of the King's Court and the Queen's ladies could make it. But the crowded city among its flooded meadows proved to be unhealthy headquarters. We hear of Endymion Porter having an ague, and Digby writes to Ormonde in the winter, "I shall contract myself in this letter as much as I can, being in a temper of health very unfit to write," and not till March could Ormonde congratulate him on his restoration of health.

Lady Digby's brother, the young Earl of Bedford, visited Oxford at this time, for although he inherited the liberal traditions of his family he had no liking for the Extremists at Westminster. But with incredible stupidity the Court treated him with such neglect that his pride forbade his remaining longer in a city where his dignity was so affronted, and so he was lost to the royal cause.

This winter the City of Oxford invited Digby to become its High Steward in place of Lord Saye and Sele, "Old Subtlety" as he was nicknamed, who had deserted Oxford for London and sat in the House of Lords at Westminster. The King held his own Parliament in Christ Church Hall, but the members often had to attend under difficulties. A letter from Digby to Rupert explains the case of one of these gentlemen, Alderman Gamel, of an old Chester family. He had left his home undefended and his regiment uncommanded in order to obey the King's summons, and therefore had a notion that he deserved to be Governor of Chester. Of course the King hated to say "No," and shifted the responsibility on Rupert. Digby wrote in February 1644 :

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR HIGHNESS,

His Majesty hath written unto you in favour of one Colonel Gamel of Cheshire, a person very well deserving of His Majesty's service; and His Majesty doth earnestly recommend him to your care and favour in point of his regiment. But for the government of Chester your Highness will easily believe that His Majesty is induced to give him that recommendation only for his satisfaction's sake.

Thus humbly kissing your Highness' hands I rest

Your Highness' most faithful, humble servant,

GEORGE DIGBY.

OXFORD, February 13, 1644.²

¹ Carte MSS., March 11, 1644.

² Warb., II. 376.

Rupert in the Council

So the poor Colonel had to learn, like most people in Oxford, that fair words from the King were only words.

Rupert himself, however, had his disappointments, and whenever anything went wrong he was always sure that Digby was to blame; probably his blunt and outspoken disposition could only reckon Digby's elaborate politeness as humbug. The Prince, it appears, had hoped to make money, of which he was sorely in need, from the ransoms of two officers whom he considered to be his prisoners. But his friend Trevor had to dash those hopes, writing to him, "Salisbury and Ravencroft that were in my own hearing given your Highness, are now pardoned and the money disposed of without giving your Highness the least intimation of it. My lord Digby did the first."¹

When Rupert did find time to come and sit on the Council, he was not the person to pour oil on the troubled waters; but he did bring a soldierly and detached common sense with him and the memory that he had fought on the Protestant side in Germany. Unluckily the Queen's views were exactly the contrary; it was incomprehensible to her that the Parliament should really care for Church government, but as they chose to flourish their Protestantism she felt it natural to turn for support to her co-religionists in Ireland.

So negotiations open and secret went on with Ireland and added to the distractions and divisions of Oxford parties, for, as we shall see, the envoys from Ireland represented in an exaggerated form every shade of English opinion. In the winter some troops did come from Ireland, but not from the Confederate Catholics on whom the Queen set her hopes, but from the hard-pressed Lord-Lieutenant, who succeeded in negotiating a "cessation of hostilities" with the Irish in order to spare a few men for his master in England. The high hopes that were founded on this Leinster army were speedily quenched, for though they started with some successes Fairfax came on them at Nantwich and absolutely routed them.

In spite of Digby's elaborate compliments to Rupert, Court opinion was very clear as to their mutual hatred, and Trevor, who was a close friend of Rupert's, wrote to Ormonde in June that it was common discourse that Digby, Culpepper, and Wilmot "are indifferent whether Rupert or the Parliament prevail," and

¹ Warb., II. 382.

The Secretary of State, 1643-4

that Rupert had nearly thrown up his commission, telling the King to choose between him and them. Wilmot was certainly not worth losing Rupert for, but when the shrewd Culpepper stood with Digby, it is plain how dangerous they felt the King's nephew was to the King's cause.

During the winter when regular campaigning was impossible there were constant secret offers being made by one Parliamentary garrison and another to open its gates if it were made worth while. In 1644 the offer came from Aylesbury, where a man named Ogle assured the Prince that the Governor would admit the royal troops on the 20th of January, the Governor meantime making preparations to entrap him. Rupert was shrewd enough to oblige Ogle to march with him, and declined to come close to the town unless his confederates appeared. No one came but a boy, from whom the Prince easily found out how he had been deceived; Ogle was instantly tied up, and Rupert endeavoured to surprise the town on the side where he was not expected. But the snow, which had so far befriended him by preventing Essex from supporting the Aylesbury forces, now began to thaw, the streams suddenly rose in flood, and Rupert had to retreat to Oxford as best he could, losing 400 men on his way. And he had not even the satisfaction of hanging Ogle, as Digby begged his life, thinking he might be useful on some future occasion.

Exactly a year later the same farce was played at Abingdon, where Digby was assured Governor Brown was longing to return to his allegiance. The town was short of provisions and the garrison discontented; Brown carried on the negotiations till he had revictualled the town and strengthened his fortifications. Then, when the Oxford troops advanced, his trap closed, and Gage, the Governor of Oxford, was killed and his men routed. Brown was a constant thorn in the side of the Oxford garrison. In October 1645 a letter to the Duke of Ormonde describes a lamentable fire that had burnt near 200 houses between Carfax and Folly Bridge, which it was believed was due to the treachery of "Brown the Woodmonger,"¹ as the literary Court gentlemen called him, for he "faced the town at the same time, warmed his hands, and went back to his quarters to bed." As will be seen by the following letter from Digby, Brown was not a chivalrous jailer to his prisoners of war.²

¹ See *Hen. V.*, V. Sc. 1.

² *Warb.*, III. 155.

The Queen at Exeter

CAPTAIN BECKMAN,

Returning hither to Oxon, I understand with very much grief that you are still a prisoner at Abingdon and used with great inhumanity ; and it doth very much aggravate my trouble at it that I am told Brown endeavours to persuade you that I am the cause of your greater suffering, and that he will not please you till I have declared he had no hand in your former escape. I cannot believe it any other but a pretence to colour his cruelty ; for every man that sees that letter of mine to Brown wherein I mentioned your name and sees Brown continued in his command, cannot but know his masters are very well satisfied what was the intention of this letter of mine, and that he lies under no suspicion for it. But lest I should be thought to omit anything on my part that might conduce to your liberty, I have thought fit to send you this, with permission to show it to Brown, wherein I do declare that that letter written to him wherein I mentioned your escape in such a way as might be conjectured that he had a hand in it, was merely an invention whereby in some measure to punish his perfidy to me, and let him and the world see that it is hard for any man to traffick in matters of treachery, but somewhat will stick by them that practise it, let them think themselves never so cunning. This I hope will suffice to clear that point and to assure you I am, your affect. friend to serve you,

GEORGE DIGBY.

OXFORD, *August 29, 1645.*

By March the Queen, who was expecting her confinement, grew nervous at being so near the scenes of fighting, and went off west to Exeter, where three months later Digby wrote her an affectionate letter begging her for the sake of her health not to give way to fears, and assuring her they were doing all in their power to draw the enemy from her neighbourhood. In March Rupert also had to leave Oxford. He hurried north to relieve Newark, which he effected so brilliantly that even the Queen was enthusiastic, and Digby wrote a rapturous letter of compliment.¹

I shall not use congratulation to your Highness for your late incomparable success in Newark ; our sense of it here is as much beyond expression as the action itself beyond ; for as it had a concurrence of all parts in it, to make it glorious to your Highness, so had it a conjecture of all circumstances of time, place, and relation, to improve and heighten the advantage of it to his Majesty's service, and therefore all my congratulations upon this subject shall be to his Majesty ; not so much for his present victory as for you, who in all your actions and in this most eminently, seem to give him assurance of a succession of more, and it is no way doubted here, but as in this action your courage and excellent conduct hath made fortune your servant to a degree beyond

¹ Warb., II., 398-9.

The Secretary of State, 1643-4

imagination, so your prudence in pursuing this victory will keep her so subjected to you and still, and both his Majesty and his ministers' confidence of this is such, that though in the place and condition where you are you are looked upon in a capacity of making a sudden progress to the happy re-establishment of his Majesty's throne, I am commanded not to deliver unto your Highness from his Majesty and those whom he is pleased to trust, any positive opinion which may be the best way to perfect that gallant work which certainly is reserved for your Highness, only to the end that your Highness may see that you having seated us now upon such an eminence we do our best to make use of it now in looking about us.

March 26.

But although Rupert had saved Newark, the city he had left behind him was anything but safe. The indefatigable Brown was keeping it in constant alarm, and now Essex and Waller had patched up their quarrels and closed in on the King, one from the north, the other from Evesham in the west. Digby wrote to Ormonde.

"We were fain to leave all things at sixes and sevens and betake ourselves to those shifts which I hope ere this Sir Brian O'Neill will have related to you and from which we are raised up again to an indifferent good condition, as if by a miracle."

The shift to which the royal army was reduced was to make one of those brilliant forced marches in which the King excelled. He slipped out by night by the North Gate along the low ground of Port Meadow and Yarnton, leaving his flag flying in Oxford to amuse Essex, who was only a couple of miles to his right at Water Eaton.¹ Waller was close on the left quite unsuspecting that his prey was crossing the Isis at Hanborough and so escaping up the lovely Windrush Valley to Burford. There they rested but a short time in Speaker Lenthall's own house, and started again at nine at night, and never halted till they reached Bourton-on-the-Water. The Roundheads at Woodstock who might have intercepted them were stopped by a tremendous storm of thunder and hail, from which the royal troops were partly sheltered by the banks of the Windrush.² At the King's command Digby wrote a long account of this retreat to Prince Rupert.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR HIGHNESS,

We have now found the mischief of not following your advice, which was if Essex and Waller should both advance with armies, to put

¹ Whitlocke, I. 407.

² Vaughan Thomas, *The Oxford Country*.

The Dash from Oxford

all the foot-garrisons (?) and for the King in person to retreat with his horse, which if we had done, I conceive the distractions we are now in had been prevented. But since that course was not taken, which really went with my sense—we have disputed passes as long as even that part of Oxfordshire which we were masters of, could maintain us, or that the stores of Oxford could feed us; but when Essex and Waller had divided their armies so as that we could neither supply ourselves on the one side nor retreat to the other without hazard of being crushed between them both, Essex lying from Islip towards Abingdon and Waller having gained the New Bridge and passed over it with his army towards us, we were then fain to have recourse unto art, which was to draw our army close to the town of Oxford, to whisper intentions of possessing Abingdon, to draw our cannon and many of our men into the town, and a little before evening to march with a great part of the garrison of Oxford toward Abingdon as if we meant to possess it, and just as it grew dark for the King in person to march with two thousand five hundred musketeers and all our horse to Burford and so to make our retreat either to Bristol or Evesham, as we should find it practicable. This our design succeeded as happily as could be expected by us in so ill a condition; our grimace towards Abingdon drew Waller back over New Bridge and Essex also hitherward on the other side, and so gave us the opportunity of gaining Burford; whereupon solemn debate . . . we resolved to steer our course to Evesham, where we arrived upon Wednesday night. By the next morning we received certain intelligence that Waller's whole army was upon the hills above Sudely, and Essex somewhat more on the right hand towards Chipping Norton, whereupon breaking down Evesham and Pershore bridges, we marched hither to Worcester. . . . This I am commanded to write to your Highness as a map of our present state without letting all this distress be anything of direction.

WORCESTER, *June 8, 1644.*¹

On the 17th Digby was able to write in a very different strain to Rupert. He was again at Broadway, and possibly wrote from the King's dictation in the panelled room in Broadway Inn, that is still called by the King's name.

BROADWAY DOWN, *June 17, 1644.*

Your Highness will find us raised to comfortable hopes from a state almost of desperation. . . . Either Essex's unskilfulness or his desire to ruin Waller has made him draw his army westward as far as Salisbury, and to send Waller after the King, who conjecturing by our remove to Bewdley that our intention was Shrewsbury, made such haste that way . . . that he gave us the opportunity of . . . gaining yesterday the pass of Evesham and this morning Broadway Hills, from whence I now write.

¹ Warb., II. 416-19.

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Up the face of the Cotswolds the King's men climbed from Broadway and struck across the high plateau in the direction of Northampton, but at Cropredy Bridge, Waller, who had realised his blunder, managed to come up with the rearguard. Then he found he had no disheartened fugitives to deal with, and was so completely defeated that for some time to come his army was a negligible quantity.

Unfortunately the old trouble of divided counsels prevented the King's following up this victory by any bold stroke. But he was able to return to Oxford, and at Witney met reinforcements "with great joy" and heard that his favourite city was secure and thoroughly provisioned. The King was now free to hasten westward after the Queen to rescue her from Essex, who with brutal frankness had informed her that he intended to bring her before Parliament to answer for the trouble she had brought on the country.

Rupert was despatched to the north. The hands of the Parliament's followers in Yorkshire had been much strengthened by the advance of the Scots across the border, and to prevent York falling into their hands Rupert's co-operation with Lord Newcastle was essential. But he only went north to repeat the old story of royalist battles. At Marston Moor he almost won a great victory, but Goring's horse dashed off to plunder and hunt the fugitives, while Cromwell's cavalry stood firm. Still, the Scots were in full flight, and Fairfax and Cromwell were both wounded: so it seems incomprehensible why Newcastle and Rupert both threw up the sponge. Hyde could only write in disgust that the less said about the whole matter the better. It is usual to find the blame of all disasters laid on Digby, so it is not surprising that Warburton agrees with Sir Philip James that the defeat at Marston Moor was due to a "fatal direction given by Lord Digby." The letter which gave the directions had been discussed by the council and signed by the King. It may have been written by Digby's hand, as were most State Papers, but there is no evidence that Digby put his private opinions into it, and for that matter Rupert was the last man to obey any directions given by Digby! Dr. Watts, Rupert's chaplain, who preserved the letter, adds in the margin a remark of Wilmot's which proves that the document had been openly discussed. He also notes "Lord Culpepper not present at the writing . . . but coming in after asked the King

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if the letter was sent, who said Yes. 'Why then,' says he, 'before God you are undone, for upon this peremptory order he will fight, whatever comes on 't.' " 1

This is the letter :

NEPHEW,

First I must congratulate with you for your good successes, assuring you that the things themselves are no more welcome to me than that you are the means. I know the importance of supplying you with powder, for which I have taken all possible ways, having sent both to Ireland and Bristol. As from Oxford this bearer is well satisfied that it is impossible to have (any) at present; but if he tell you that I can spare them from hence I leave you to judge having but thirty-six left (*sic*). But what I can get from Bristol (of which there is not much certainly, it being threatened to be besieged) you shall have. And now I must give the true state of my affairs which of their condition be such as enforces me to give you more *peremptory commands* than I would willingly do, you must not take it ill. If York be lost I shall esteem *my crown little less*; unless supported by your sudden march on me; and a miraculous conquest in the south, before the effects of their Northern power can be found here. *But if* York be relieved and *you beat the rebel's army* of both kingdoms which are before it, then (*but otherwise not*) (*Note.* This parenthesis is said to have been inserted by Wilmot) I may possibly make a shift upon the defensive to spin out time until you come to assist me. Wherefore I *command and conjure you* by the duty and affection I know you bear me, that all new enterprises laid aside you immediately march, according to your first intention with all your force to the relief of York. But if that be either lost or have freed themselves of the besiegers in that for want of powder you cannot undertake that work, that you immediately march with your whole strength directly to Worcester to assist me and my army, without which, or your having relieved York by beating the Scots, all the successes you can afterwards have must infallibly be useless unto me. You may believe that nothing but an extreme necessity could make me write thus unto you; wherefore in this case I can no ways doubt of your punctual compliance with your loving and most faithful friend.

CHARLES R.²

It will be seen by any unbiassed reader that the letter only urged Rupert to relieve York. It certainly did not order him to attack at three o'clock in the afternoon without any consultations with Newcastle! Clarendon says bluntly that the letter would not bear the sense Rupert put on it.³

Meantime the King had marched westward with such speed that Dan O'Neill vowed it was not a march at all but an example

¹ Warb., II. 432.

² *Ibid.*, II. 437-9.

³ *Gt. Reb.*, II. 757.

of perpetual motion. But before he could reach Exeter the little Princess Henrietta was born and the Queen had made her escape in a Dutch man-of-war. The King was eager to avenge her on Essex, and advanced, driving the Parliamentary army further and further from its supports into the remote parts of Cornwall.

But the King was even more troubled than usual by the quarrels and jealousies of his Council. Wilmot was making himself absolutely impossible. Hyde admits that he never got drunk when he was near the enemy, but suggests that was more from cowardice than self-control. He had unlimited ambition and no scruples save a few fears from religion, and never valued his promises, honour or friendship. Now he was sullen and mutinous and so jealous of Digby and Culpepper that he used the influence which, in spite of his faults, he preserved over his officers to induce them to petition the King to remove these two from his Council. And then judging the two by himself, he became convinced that they would retaliate and ruin his position with the King and the army, so, like the unjust steward in the parable, he tried to make terms with his Lord's debtors and preached pacificism in season and out of season, and even sent proposals of his own to Essex, which Essex very properly answered with cold contempt.

Daniel O'Neill wrote from Boconnock in August¹ to tell Ormonde of the uncertainties that surrounded the throne, and that his two best friends, Wilmot and Digby, had fallen out.

"I found my Lord Wilmot (whom I conceive most in the wrong) most averse to a reconciliation. While I was contriving other ways to bring him about, he endeavours to render my Lord Digby odious to the army and indeed to all honest people by accusing him of dissuading the King from any thoughts of peace or agreement with his people.

"My Lord Digby seeing he could not work him to friendship endeavoured to remove him from his power and therefore accused him to His Majesty of those things in the charge I send, whereon His Majesty caused him to be arrested the same day we came hither, in the face of all the army, which so incensed the army that they presently petitioned His Majesty. Two friends I have lost, for my Lord Digby hath so much malice upon him that I see clearly he cannot long stand after the other."²

¹ Carte, VI. 159.

² *Ibid.*, VI. 229.

Victory in Cornwall

As O'Neill says, the King's patience was exhausted, and when he had established himself at Boconnock, so shutting Essex in at Fowey, he arrested Wilmot at the head of his troops and sent him a prisoner to Exeter, calling Goring west to take his place.

In October Trevor told Ormonde that Wilmot, by the King's leave, had gone to travel, and that the King had sent him £500 and made him of the Prince of Wales' bedchamber. "So either his crime is not much or the inconvenience very great that would have followed on his trial. For my part I believe both. I understand that he and the Marquis of Newcastle are preparing a charge against Prince Rupert." O'Neill wrote (October 3rd) that Wilmot, wisely considering the prejudice his business was like to bring upon the King's affairs and on himself, had waived his right to a trial and gone to France to wait upon the Queen, whom the King had desired to receive him well.

Trevor wrote again on October 13, 1644, still very angry with everybody and everything. Dan O'Neill, he was sure, was not to be trusted, and Rupert now only cared for his own ease and pleasure, he had hoped the scandalous scenes at Boconnock might have ruined Digby as well as Wilmot, but "his project failing he plays the courtier and is reconciled, which is great happiness to the King." Poor King!

So in spite of O'Neill's prophecies Digby held his own and had the satisfaction not only of seeing Wilmot sent on his travels, but also saw the Parliamentary foot surrender and "march away with staves in their hands," and Essex escaping in a fishing boat. Only, alas! while Goring was celebrating the bloodless victory by getting drunk, the Parliament cavalry quietly slipped between his sentries and rode away with arms and horses "to fight another day." And that, after the King had permitted the officers, all but Skippon, to kiss his hand! Hyde says His Majesty proceeded with no less prudence than clemency, for the royal forces, half-naked and unshod, could never have defeated Essex's men with their back against the wall. Naturally the King had no means of keeping a whole army prisoners of war, but that the officers should have been free to hurry off to join the Parliamentary troops and block his return to Oxford seems at least strange.

Digby wrote from Exeter to Ormonde in his usual cheerful strain, reviewing the whole campaign and telling how "God hath blest His Majesty's affairs even to miracle," and how they were

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now returning eastward, strong and flushed with victory ; in fact affairs were "in the best posture they had been at any time since these unhappy wars." ¹ But the King's victorious army dwindled as he marched from its own counties, and by the time he reached Berkshire it numbered only 10,000, and then, at the old battlefield at Newbury, he found Manchester, Skippon and Waller blocking the road with 19,000 men.

Digby, however, was full of hope. He wrote to Rupert on the 24th of October explaining how well the King was posted. If the enemy tried to blockade they would fail for lack of shelter. "If they remove we shall be able to move towards Oxford or Wallingford, which if we can once gain we are there sure to join with you without impediment, and to get very much the start of them through Buckingham towards that farther object which you propose in the Associated Counties." ² Charles decided to wait to allow Rupert to join him, and threw up earthworks under the cover of Donnington Castle, which, it seems, Manchester's ill-humour allowed him to complete without interference. For Manchester had objected to co-operating at all, saying that his army had been raised to guard the Eastern Counties, not to be sent about at the Parliament's beck and call. He did not realise that if his men did not do their job now, Rupert proposed to visit the Eastern Association in its own sacred counties. But Manchester also was troubled in mind about the whole question of the war. "If we beat the King ninety-nine times," he said, "yet he is King still, and so will his posterity be after him, but if the King beats us, we shall all be hanged and our posterity be made slaves." Holding these views, he was not very eager to attack, but Waller surprised and routed Prince Maurice while Skippon carried the King's trenches ; Manchester made up his mind to join in, too late, and was driven back. But on the whole the day was not favourable to the King, and he drew off his forces by one of those rapid, silent marches in which he excelled, and eventually re-established himself in Oxford for the winter.

¹ Carte, VI. 199, September 13, 1644.

² Add. MSS. 1898, folio 316, given by Gardiner, *Gt. C.W.*, II. 47.

VI

THE EBBING TIDE, 1644-5

DURING THAT WINTER the King's negotiations with the Parliament dragged on at Uxbridge, but fruitlessly, for Digby told Ormonde peace could only have been gained by the total subversion of Church and State, giving regal power into the hands of the rebels and the Kingdom to the Scots !

With an unconfessed premonition of disaster, the King sent the Prince of Wales from him in March 1644, giving as his reason that it was now time to "unboy" Charles and teach him to stand alone. The lad of fifteen was, however, not given much chance of independence ; Berkshire went as his governor (Hyde says the Prince would have been better off with none), and also with him went the pick of the King's Council, Culpepper, Hyde, Hopton and Richmond. The King was left alone with Digby.

Hyde was dismayed at finding what a general exodus the King contemplated, but Charles was obstinate and even said unless the Chancellor went the Prince should stay at Oxford ; so with much foreboding Hyde bade farewell to the King he was never to see again.

The Prince went first to Bristol, where he was safe and respectable under Lord Hopton's care and also lived at Lord Hopton's expense, the King having "not one penny in his exchequer to bestow upon him."

Before he started, Goring had been sent to the West to clear the way for His Royal Highness, and routed the Parliament horse so thoroughly that Cromwell is said to have had to hide in a tree in Sir John Mellor's Park.¹ But Hyde asserts that Goring was merely sent west by Rupert's jealousy, and that he and his men would have been far more useful at the King's side at Oxford.

¹ *Civil War in Dorset*, p. 251.

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Digby and Goring were just now fast friends. Hyde says, "either of them believing he could deceive the other and so with equal passion embracing the engagement." A curious foundation for a friendship! But Goring's power of fascination was amazing. Not only was he witty and courageous, he was also eminently handsome with a face full of manly intelligence. He had such an appearance of modesty that he would blush like a girl, and yet Hyde says he would have violated any rules of honour "out of humour or for wits' sake, and loved no man so well but that he would cozen him and than expose him to mirth for being cozened." He would "without hesitation have broken any trust or done any act of treachery to have satisfied an ordinary passion or appetite, and in truth wanted nothing but industry (for he had wit and courage and understanding and ambition uncontrolled by any fear of God or man) to have been as eminent and successful in the highest attempt of wickedness as any man in the age he lived in, or before. Of all his qualifications dissimulation was his master-piece, in which he so much excelled that men were not ordinarily ashamed or out of countenance with being deceived but twice by him."¹

Digby wrote to this friend on the 29th of March from Oxford :²

DEAR GENERAL,

I have often writ to you since I heard from you and we live here in great ignorance of what you are doing. If you can settle those counties in any convenient time so that the forces of those parts may march towards the enemy's quarters one way, at the same time that Prince Rupert's army will be ready to do it another, we are likely to have a comfortable campaign of it, for the King will be ready within a fortnight at furthest to take the field with an army of at least 10,000 horse and foot. Prince Rupert writing the cheerfulest and with the utmost confidence of the goodness of his men that I have known him do at any time, the rebels' distractions are great, the levies for their new army very slow.

Montrose, who was now named Lieutenant-General for Scotland, had just made his splendid dash across the snowy mountains of Lochaber, and nearly caught the Great Argyll himself; and although Macallum More escaped, the victory of Inverlochy had completely staggered the Presbyterian power.

¹ Cl., *Gt. Reb.*, II. 831.

² Sanford, *Studies*, p. 620.

So Digby had some reason for his congratulations when he continued to Goring,

The King's affairs do prosper so in Scotland as we have rather reason to hope for friends than to fear more enemies from thence. And from beyond sea we grow now pretty certain of considerable supports. Dear General, I have nothing to add but to conjure you to be wary of debauches, there fly hither the reports of the liberty you give yourself much to your disadvantage, and you have enemies who are apt to make use of it.

I am your most faithfully humble servant,
Geo. D.

I have sent for my horses and servants to Sherborne, which must specially be here by such a day as I have appointed them, or I shall not know how to wait upon the King. If they shall need it, pray afford them a convoy.

Again and again Digby writes to his "dear General," repeating his warnings and entreaties, and always in vain. In March he had to admit to Rupert that Weymouth was lost entirely through Goring's drunken carelessness. Rupert was at this time in Wales trying to get things into order. Digby writes :

This enclosed to your Highness from General Goring, which the King opened, was received the last night. I profess, sir, I have not patience to discourse of the unlucky subject of it ; so mad and so wild a misfortune was never heard of, wherever the fault light. I shall only give you an account of the orders sent by His Majesty to General Goring, thereupon which you will find in the enclosed copy of His Majesty's letter to him which was accompanied by a second peremptory order to Sir R. Grenville in pursuance of your Highness's former direction to him to march away from Plymouth, leaving it well blocked up. It was the only course that could be thought here either rational or probable to repair that loss. This is all the trouble at present from your Highness's most affectionate humble servant,

GEORGE DIGBY.

OXFORD, *March 5*, 1645.

A postscript adds that the King begs the Prince not let Lord Loughborough be sent home discontented, "as here he appears to be highly." ¹

Rupert wrote from Hereford at the end of the month that he was marching to Bristol to see Prince Charles ; the Prince's Council had been venturing to give orders to Goring, and Rupert

¹ Warb., III. 65-6.

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was jealous of this infringement of his powers, and wrote (March 31st), to Legge that he was starting for Bristol, "to rob them of their arms, and if I had power, of Prince Charles." ¹ Goring was ordered to retire to Wells or Taunton, and by April he was sufficiently suppressed to be reported as "disconcerted," and in June the Prince's Council admitted that they could do without his protection and that his proper place was in Oxford, but he was warned of the difficulties of the situation by Digby on June 21st.

DEAR GENERAL,

It having been represented here unto the King that his letter of the 10th of May to the Prince of Wales concerning the granting of Commissions and of giving you no positive orders, was understood as a great lessening of his power and honour and amounting to little less than a vacating of his commission, it hath been held necessary for the satisfaction of His Highness and his Council to send another letter to the Prince of Wales by way of explanation of the former; which, for fear it should be wrong represented unto you by somebody that is not well pleased with anything of that kind I have sent you a copy which I am confident you will approve of and rest still more and more confident that I shall never fail of all circumstances of vigilance in all things that may concern you as being unalterable. My Lord, your most humble faithful servant.

The King's letter says he has no intention to abridge or restrict the Prince's power and authority but only to give cautions as to its exercise.

The state of things at the Royal headquarters was now anything but comfortable. Cromwell had got his New Model army started and had been roving about the Midlands and "uncattled" the neighbourhood of Oxford. So the city grew short of provisions, and both soldiers and citizens grew mutinous. The Parliament sitting at Christchurch was troublesome, and even went so far as to call the Secretary of State an "incendiary," but the King easily shut their mouths by a dissolution. But he could not dissolve his Privy Council, and there the debates were furious; so furious indeed, that at last the King rebelled against their constant thwarting of his designs and requested such disrespectful behaviour might not occur again.²

Digby had written at the end of April to Rupert ³ to tell him how Cromwell had taken Bletchington House and the danger

¹ Warb., III. 74.

² Evelyn, *Mems. Bohn*, VI. 150.

³ Warb., III. 778.

Marching North

of the King's being besieged in Oxford, and asking "whether it be not necessary for Prince Rupert to march hither as strong as Prince Rupert can."

Accordingly Rupert and Maurice hurried South. Massey wrote: "They marched from Broadway before day and were at Stowe by ten of the clock. Their march is exceeding speedy." The King joined them at Stow, having a second time slipped through the fingers of his enemy, and left Rupert's friend Legge Governor of Oxford.

But although he had escaped, Charles had but 11,000 men with whom to relieve Chester, prevent the Scots from joining hands with the Parliamentarians in the North, take Taunton in the West, and support the Prince of Wales at Bristol! At Woodstock the question was debated on which side the King should turn first, to the West to catch Fairfax before he could join Cromwell or to the North to meet the Scots?

The arguments in favour of the King's marching North were much strengthened by the fascination which the land of his birth always exercised over Charles, and how could a romantic spirit such as his refuse such an invitation as the victorious Montrose sent, "I have conquered the country from Dan to Beersheba, let the King come now"! Further, Rupert was eager for a Northern Campaign; he hoped to slip between the forces of the Parliament and their Scottish allies, and either beat each before they could join, or else make terms with the Scots,¹ and having detached them to turn West and relieve Chester.

Digby had a much more brilliant proposal, which, if the King had been stronger and the Parliament weaker, might have ended the war, for he wished to dash into the heart of the enemies' country, the home of the Eastern Association, and to crush Cromwell's power at its roots. Failing that scheme, Digby was ready to agree with the rest of the Council and go West to prevent Fairfax from relieving Taunton and joining forces in Somerset with Cromwell.

When the Northern Campaign was finally decided on, Goring left Somerset, rather to the relief of the Prince's Council; although Hyde, before his age in guessing the danger of wasting strength in defending fortresses, wrote, that if such a place as Oxford "cannot endure the face of an army for some time, I would dwell

¹ Warb., III. 98.

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hereafter in the fields and villages and think no more of fortifying towns." ¹

But Goring and his men arrived in Oxfordshire, and at once had a very satisfactory engagement with the horse of Cromwell and Fairfax when they were trying to cross the Isis, and so joined the King in all the flush of victory. But having once got to the King's headquarters, Goring was no more desirous to stay there under the command of Rupert than Rupert was desirous to keep him. So, extraordinary as it may seem, this ill-assorted pair struck up a sort of alliance and told each other all the bad things the Prince's Council had said of each, and agreed, in whatever else they differed, they would do all they could to lessen its credit.

Trevor wrote to Ormonde: "No love is lost between Goring and the Council, and just now Lord Digby and Mr. Goring are no friends. Prince Rupert still goes with Mr. Goring, but how long that will hold I dare not undertake, knowing both their constitutions. I find the question asked: Why do the people rage? but do not remember to have read any answer to it. There is an expectation that Ormonde may be called over to force (reinforce?) the King's armies. All is lost for want of government, the great officers given over to pleasure, to the ruin of the King."

Hyde did not believe in any breach between Digby and Goring, but explains that Goring, both from "his late good fortune and the artifice of the Lord Digby, was too easily believed" by the King, who wrote, on the 10th of May, desiring the young Prince to admit General Goring to all consultations, that he was to have power to give commissions, and that no binding orders were to be given to him. With these triumphant orders, Goring returned into the West, "leaving the King very short of horse," and "with cause enough to lament that counsel which fatally dismissed Goring and his forces at a time in which, if he had been born to serve his country, his presence might have been of use and benefit to the King."

But Goring never seemed finally dispensed with, for shortly after Digby wrote from Tutbury to Nicholas: "If Cromwell and Fairfax advance we shall endeavour to fight with them, I believe it will be about Leicester. I hope by this time Goring

¹ Warb., III. 94, May 27th.

The Storm of Leicester

is about Oxford with his horse. If we can be so happy that he comes in time we shall infallibly crush them between us. For God's sake quicken his march all that's possible." A second letter, written the same night by order of the King and Rupert, assures Nicholas that Oxford should be relieved if necessary, but begged him not to represent his need as more pressing than he could help. If it could but hold out for six weeks or be relieved by Goring without the King detaining forces to send them, all would be well, for "we never had more cause to thank God since the war began than for putting it into their hearts to engage in that step, there being nothing more probable than that within the time mentioned, the King having such an army as he hath, we shall be able to put His Majesty's affairs in such a condition so that the relieving of you shall do both all and the whole work at once. For God's sake lay this to heart and give us all the time you can."

When the King had started on his northern march, Digby had written on May 7th: "We have great unanimity among ourselves and the rebels great distractions."¹ The great unanimity was hardly to be found except in Digby's fertile imagination. Rupert, in spite of having got his own way, was even more irritable and suspicious than usual; he vowed that his Royal uncle was falling more and more into the hands of mere courtiers who understood nothing of war, and that Lord Digby omitted nothing that might prejudice him. At last, fretted by the constant delays, he went off to Leicester on May 13th, and stormed it on the 29th.

In June Digby wrote to Goring urging him to march towards Oxford in order at the least to worry its besiegers. "If the Governor of Oxford assures us he is provided for six weeks or two months we shall then, I make no question, relieve our Northern garrisons, beat the Scots, or make them retreat and march Southward with a gallant army indeed. Pontefract once succoured, we are assured of great things from Yorkshire."²

But the King was still nervous about Oxford, where he had left the little Duke of York and many lords and ladies and was half inclined to turn back to protect it, till he heard that Fairfax had been repulsed by the garrison of Borstal House and was

¹ Cl. MSS., 1895. *Gr. C.W.*, II. 311.

² Cl. MSS., 1889.

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wasting no time on Oxford; then the King continued his movements to the North in a less anxious frame of mind.

Fairfax now was following hard after him, hoping to trap the King between his own forces and the Scots, and so came the last and fatal defeat at Naseby, when, on the 14th of June, Fairfax and Cromwell practically wiped the Royal Army out of existence. Someone caught the King's bridle and forced him to fly. The infantry were all captured; Rupert's horse, with the King's guards, had to abandon their artillery and ride for their lives to Leicester.

Naturally the blame of the disaster was laid on many shoulders, and Rupert's were the first.

Digby wrote to Legge, very delicately insinuating his own opinion :

June 30.

MY DEAR GOVERNOR,

I thank you for your kindness of the 22nd June and I joy much to find that our late misfortune works no more dejection amongst you, but that it rather quickens you in His Majesty's service. Our levies here in Wales go on cheerfully. . . . I make no question if God bless us but with probable success in the West we shall quickly see ourselves in as good condition as ever. I cannot but understand it as a respect to me, that you permitted not my servant Felton to be molested before you acquainted me with the occasion, but now you have done so, if he have played the fool in that kind, let him suffer for it; but I believe him too discreet a man, and he swears the contrary in a letter to one of my secretaries where he takes notice of such a report raised upon him, as he believes, in malice to me.

I am sure that Prince Rupert hath so little kindness for me as I daily find he hath, it imports both to me and mine to be much the more cautious not to speak anything that may be wrested to his prejudice. I can but lament my misfortune that Prince Rupert is neither gainable nor tenable by me though I have endured it with all the industry and justness unto him in the world, and I lament your absence from him. Yet at least, if Prince Rupert cannot be better inclined towards me, that yet you might prevail with him so far as that his heats and misapprehension of things may not wound his own honour and prejudice the King's service. I am very unhappy that I cannot speak with you since the discourse that my heart is full of is too long for a letter and of a nature not fit for it. But I conjure you if you preserve that justice and kindness for me which I will not doubt if you hear anything from Prince Rupert concerning me, suspend your judgment. As for the particular aspersion upon him which you mention, of fighting against advice, he is very much wronged in it whatever you mean in the general or in the particular of that day. For in the general when contrary to

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the advice of so many it was once resolved we should march that way we did, it was then the unanimous opinion of all that if Fairfax should follow us near, we ought to turn upon him and fight with him before he could join with the Scots: and for the particular time, place and circumstances of our fighting that day his Highness cannot be said to have gone against my lord Astley or any other advice: for I am confident no man was asked upon the occasion, I am sure no council was called. I shall only say this freely to you that I think a principal occasion of our misfortune was the want of you with us; for had you been there I am persuaded that when once we have come up so near them as that they could not go from us you would at least have asked some question whether having store and provisions with us we should not rather have tried to bring them to our post than to have assaulted them constantly in theirs. That if it were resolved we must assail them you would have asked the question whether it had not been fit rather to have advanced to or gained some place where the cannon might have been of some use, than to have drawn up hill against them so as never to make use of our piece. And lastly that before we joined battle whether it would not have been convenient to have viewed the enemy's strength and posture, rather than to have left it to this hour in dispute whether the enemy had not three thousand men in reserve than those we fought with, which Sir William Vaughan who charged quite through those bodies which were in our eye positively affirms. I make no doubt but you would also have asked some material questions concerning a reserve and a placing of the King's person first where it should not have been suddenly involved in the confusion. But really my dear Will I do not write this with reflexion, for indeed we were all carried on at that time with such a spirit and confidence of victory as though he that should have said "consider" would have been your foe, and so did your fate lead as scarcely one of us did think of a queer objection which after the ill success, every child could light on. Well, let us look forward; give your Prince good advice as to caution and value of council and God will yet make him an instrument of much happiness to the King and Kingdom and that being I will adore him as much as you love him though he should hate as much.

Your faithfulest friend and servant,

GEORGE DIGBY.¹

Legge's answer to this letter tears Digby's clever spider's web to tatters.

"And truly my Lord your last letter to me gives me some cause to think your Lordship not altogether free from what he (Prince Rupert) often accused you of as the reason of his jealousies; which was, that you did both say and do things to his prejudice not in an open and direct way, 'but obscurely and obliquely';

¹ Warb., III. 125.

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and this way under your Lordship's pardon I find your letter, in my understanding, very full.

" . . . Were any man in the Army dissatisfied in his directions or in the order he ought to have informed the general of it and to have received further satisfaction. And for the not calling of a council at the instant, truly the Prince having before laid his business, were there need of it, then blame must be as much yours as any man's either in not considering how fit it were to be called or having conceived of it, at least in not moving of it. . . . And assure yourself you are not free from great blame towards Prince Rupert and no man will give you this free language at a cheaper rate than myself though many discourse of it." ¹

Legge was very honest and very angry.

But it must be remembered that Legge had not been at Naseby, and only had Rupert's reports to go on, while Digby was an eyewitness.

The King, with the few horsemen left to him, made his way as best he could southward by Lichfield and Bewdley, and at last was able to rest in the magnificent castle of the old Marquis of Worcester at Raglan. The Scots, who had been on his heels, luckily waited to try and take Hereford, and the King was able to move on to Cardiff, whence he could take ship across the Severn sea to Bristol or to loyal Cornwall, or even, as was suggested once or twice, go to Ireland. The King's Council was not anxious that he should go to Bristol, where he would be entirely in Rupert's hands, and they pleaded the danger from the plague which had broken out in the city.

The chance of a refuge in Cornwall was destroyed by the news of the loss of Bridgwater and of Goring's disgraceful rout at Langport, a defeat so disgraceful that it ended his military career ; he threw up his position and retired to the Continent.

Trevor had gone to Cornwall in August, and wrote to Ormonde from Launceston saying if the enemy advanced there he did not know how he could escape. With his "tun of body" he could neither fly nor swim—but on the whole he thinks he will try swimming.

Even Digby's spirits could not hold up against such disasters. From Cardiff he wrote to Nicholas : " Such a torrent of misfortunes hath quite overbourne my sanguine complexion. Yet

¹ Warb., III. 129-31.

that is supported by faith that God will not wholly desert us nor so good a cause." ¹

Digby's depression was naturally increased by the news that must have reached him about this time, that his father's house was taken and in ruins. Sir Lewis Dyves had defended Sherborne Castle with a great gallantry, but Fairfax took it on the 6th of August, when it was dismantled, Sir Lewis sent a prisoner to London, and most of the inmates stripped to their skins. ²

Digby wrote even more despondently ³ to Ormonde than to Nicholas, repeating the tale of the Naseby disaster, and telling how Leicester had been surrendered without resistance, and so Fairfax set loose to relieve Taunton, surprise Goring, and take Bridgwater. The western gentlemen were naturally much discouraged, but Montrose's victories had still disposed the King to march northward, till the loss of Pomphret closed that way of escape. Now the King's only refuge must be either Cornwall or North Wales. "To this condition it hath pleased God to bring us by our own precipitation." Luckily the Scots army was still hung up before Hereford, which gave time to make plans; but whatever happened, "the foundations of our greatest hope is in you, whose integrity, prudence and generosity makes me believe that God hath designed you to be His most happy instrument of restoring His Majesty."

In an earlier letter he had asserted that, bad as things were, all might be retrieved if troops came from Ireland; it was useless to object to employing men from the Confederate Catholics, for the condition of the King was such that he must catch any helping hand whether from foreigners or subjects. It was decided not to trust to correspondence, but to send over Sir Marmaduke Langdale to talk over matters with the Lord-Lieutenant. Later on Langdale and Digby became good friends, but at the moment Digby had to add a private note to his dispatch warning Ormonde that though Langdale was a subtle and courageous man he was entirely a creature of Rupert's; "this," he adds, he said, "not as Secretary of State but as without reserve, Your Excellency's most affectionate and faithful servant." ⁴

More private directions were sent shortly after by O'Neill,

¹ S.P. Dom.

² Carte, VI. 306, August 2nd.

³ Hutchins, *Dorset*, p. 278.

⁴ Carte, VI. 301.

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who, Digby assured Ormonde, was going over to make himself generally useful.

Culpepper crossed the Channel from Bristol to meet the King at Cardiff, and after a consultation carried back a sort of farewell order to the Prince commanding him to leave the country rather than fall into the hands of the Parliament.

Although Digby could now and then weave hopes, the men round the King had none. The prospects seemed to grow gloomier daily, the country gentlemen began to discuss the chances of getting decent terms from the Parliament, and the officers, realising the hopelessness of the struggle and being sick of the war, were very ready to listen to these pacifists. Even Rupert himself wrote to the Duke of Richmond, "His Majesty hath now no way to preserve his posterity, kingdom and nobility, but by a treaty."¹

The King answered these protests with a heroism that was perhaps more that of a martyr than a statesman.

"I must confess that speaking either as to a mere soldier or statesman I must say, there is no probability but of my ruin, but as a Christian I must tell you that God will not suffer rebels to prosper or His cause to be overthrown, and whatever personal punishment it shall please Him to inflict on me, must not make me repine, much less give over this quarrel. I must avow to all my friends that he that will stay with me at this time must expect and resolve either to die for a good cause, or, which is worse, to live as miserable in maintaining it as the violence of insulting rebels can make him."²

It was doubtless this letter that Digby alluded to in a long dispatch to Jermyn on August 7th.

"I have great confidence in the King's virtue and steadiness and I am much improved in it by this enclosed letter which he wrote (name blotted out) in his great distress in Wales upon occasion of (Rupert) declaring unto him that there was nothing left for him to do but seek conditions. I protest to God I knew nothing of this letter or of the occasion till a good while after it was sent, but having then gained a sight of it I got leave to communicate a copy of it only to the Queen and yourself."³

Digby, who still kept up hope when other people abandoned

¹ July 28, 1645, Warb., III. 149.

² Cl., *Gr. Reb.*, II. 1019.

³ Warb., III. 1612.

it, assured Jermyn in the same letter that all chances of success were not lost—it was faint hearts round the King that he feared more than the forces of the Parliament.

“ It is most true that, desperate as our condition seems, I have in apprehension but that having got thus far in the year we shall be safe till the next from any further great mischief ; and that probably by helps from Denmark and Ireland and monies from you, that is from France—we may possibly have a fresh and hopeful resource the next Spring. These hopes I am confident the condition of our business itself will bear would the humours of our own party bear them with patience. But alas ! my Lord we must not expect it, there is such an universal weariness of the war, despair of a possibility of the King to recover, and so much of private interest grown from these upon everybody, that I protest to God I do not know four persons living besides myself and you that have not already given clear demonstrations that they will purchase their own and as they flatter themselves the Kingdom’s quiet—at any price to the King, to the Church, to the faithful of his party ; and to deal freely with you, I do not think it will be in the King’s power to hinder himself being forced to accept such conditions as the rebels will give him and that the next news that you will hear after we have been one month at Oxford will be that I, and those few others who may be thought by our counsels to fortify the King in firmness to his principles, will be torn from him.”

At present the King was able to disregard these counsels of despair, and he started to beat the Western Counties to collect some sort of army and sent orders to Stourbridge for more pike-heads.

The unlucky Worcestershire country folk cursed both parties alike, and tried to rise for their own protection under the name of “ Clubmen,” but Rupert rode through them near Bredon Hill, and no more was heard of them.

It was at least in the King’s favour that the invading army of Scots were exacting free-quarters in the Western Counties and getting themselves thoroughly hated by their allies. The King never gave up dreams of winning them over which Digby encouraged, writing to Rupert that the enemies had not any man in the field in Scotland, and as for the Scots in England, it would be quite easy to win them over by a few vague promises of the abolition of episcopacy. But Digby also wrote to Jermyn :¹

¹ Bankes’ MSS., August 5th.

"Thus much I must of necessity tell you, that unless we allow the Scots without engagement to hope that the King may possibly be brought in time to hearken unto such a change of (Church) Government, as at least by referring it to a Synod, there is no hope whatever they will be brought to so much as a parley with us, wherein if once skilfully engaged by letting them promise themselves what the King will never promise them we shall find means to entangle them so that it shall be impossible for them ever to get off again. Unhappily," he admits the King's constancy to his religion was such "as no one can possibly prevail with him so much as to act his part in letting them swallow any hopes whether he give it them or not."

Culpepper also wrote to Digby¹ urging that some endeavour should be made to gain the Scots, and Digby accordingly drafted an eloquent letter, as pious as Cromwell himself could have made it, asserting that the King confessed God's punishment in England and His mercy in Montrose being now master of nearly all Scotland and promising indemnity and all concessions which good subjects could ask and a King grant with justice and honour; but whether this edifying document was ever sent is not clear. A year before Dan O'Neill had told the Duke of Ormonde that he had heard "the King shall give way that episcopacy shall down and the Lord Digby and Lord Jermyn shall be put from Court. I believe," he goes on, "the demands will be granted or anything that shall bring us to London however infamous." He did not yet know the King, and that there was a point beyond which he would not go.

At present the King was not driven to such expedients, for after a couple of days' dash to Oxford to assure himself of its safety he turned back to Hereford, and by the time he got to Worcester "the Scottish mist," wrote Scudamore, "began to disperse and next morning vanished quite out of sight."²

It was a miracle that Charles had done so much with the small forces at his command, and Clarendon, who was not with him, hardly realised how great his difficulties had been.³ The King then turned a second time to Raglan for a three weeks' rest in the splendour of Raglan Castle in company with its wise and

¹ September 18th, Barnstaple (Cl., S.P., II.).

² Willis Bund, *Civil War in Worcestershire*.

³ Willis Bund.

witty old master. But the unseemly squabbles among the King's friends could no more be checked by the wisdom and wit of the Marquis than by the dignity of the King.

Jermyn wrote entreating Digby to do his best to end the scandal, but from Raglan,¹ Digby answered that he had already done his best, but Rupert was making it impossible for anyone but himself to be with the King, and was displeased about too many matters to make it possible to satisfy him. He disapproved of the King having marched towards Oxford by Daventry instead of by Harborough, he disapproved of the advice sent to the Prince of Wales; in fact, it was impossible to please him.

The following month Lady Digby (one of the rare times that we meet with her name) sends to warn "her dear heart" of Rupert's enmity,² while Rupert noted in his diary that Ashburnham warned him Digby would be his ruin.³ In July he had written to his faithful Will Legge, "You do well to wonder why Prince Rupert is not with the King, but when you know the Lord Digby's intention to ruin him you will not find it strange."⁴

Clearly the position was becoming impossible. Digby found it hard to hold his own without the backing of Culpepper and Hyde. He had told Jermyn from Raglan on July 10th, that when he had differed from Prince Rupert "I went not underhand but declared with Prince Rupert what I thought myself bound to do. . . . Really, my Lord, if I have either temper or truth I have not failed in any point of application to the Prince. . . . Now that we are going into the West where will be men of the King's Council and of more valuable judgment than myself, I believe I shall be able to hold the duty of my place in the King's service without making it suffer by his animosities against me. But should His Majesty have continued with Prince Rupert, and I only attending him as Minister of State, I who have long since resolved to serve him no longer than I may be useful to him I should have thought it my duty to have betaken myself to other course than when I was inconsistent with one so much more necessary to the conduct of his affairs."

Also from Raglan, Digby wrote to the Queen, expressing his thankfulness that at least no papers of his were lost at Naseby when the King's Cabinet was unfortunately and carelessly lost.

¹ Warb., III. 135.

² Warb., III. 145.

³ S.P. Dom., September 14th, Oxford.

⁴ *Ibid.*, III. 156.

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A copy of this letter was taken a few months later when Digby's own Cabinet shared the fate of the King's and fell into the hands of the enemy at Sherborne !

It was at Raglan that the King received the last and almost the worst blow of the war and heard that Rupert had surrendered Bristol ! Anger and grief were almost equally violent, and Charles ordered his nephew instantly to leave the Kingdom and never see his face again. "What is to be done," he wrote, "after one that is so near to me as you are in blood and friendship submits himself to so mean an action ! I give it the easiest term." There was a report that Digby had drawn up articles of high treason against Rupert ; he certainly wrote to the Queen that he could not doubt that Rupert had been bribed by the Parliament ! It must be admitted it was unfortunate that Rupert, after having so vehemently urged that terms should be made with Parliament, should have surrendered the key of the west with such faint resistance that the victors could only say : "It is the Lord's doing and marvellous in our eyes !"

VII

FORGOTTEN BY AUTHORITY

"Authority forgets a dying king."—*Morte d'Arthur*.

THE UNHAPPY KING now knew not where to turn. With Bristol lost, he was shut off from refuge in the loyal counties of Devon and Cornwall, while Poyntz lay between him and his favourite headquarters at Oxford.

"In great perplexity and irresolution," says Clarendon, "he decided to move northward, and did so successfully, in spite of the nearness of the Scottish army. Past Ludlow, with its memories of Comus, and up the wooded Vale of Llangollen, he marched to Chester, proposing after he had relieved it once more to try to get across the border and join Montrose.

But outside the walls of Chester he again found Pointz, and at Rowton Heath disaster again overtook him; for the last time he faced his enemy in the field, only to be so completely defeated that his cavalry fled all over the country to save themselves.

Now the King practically had his back against the wall. Some suggested that he might find a refuge in Anglesey, while after Prince Maurice had appeared with 800 horse, most of the King's advisers recommended him to return with his nephew to Worcester, of which he was Governor. There could not be a more suitable headquarters, and the army, such as it was, could be disposed of in the towns and villages along the Severn.

But Digby vehemently opposed this plan. He had begun to discover, to his great surprise, that many people were giving him credit for Rupert's disgrace, and that it was generally believed that the King's anger with his nephew was mostly due to Digby's influence. If the King now were to settle at Worcester under Maurice's guardianship, Rupert would certainly hasten there to plead his own cause. The King's family affection would probably triumph over his anger at the loss of Bristol, and he would

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throw himself into the arms of his nephews; then Digby would have to face alone the enmity of Rupert and Maurice and the "extreme malice" of their companion Lord Gerard.

So Digby used all his powers of persuasion to turn the King eastward to Newark, where he would be safe both from the Parliamentary armies and from his nephews. He succeeded, and the King turned his back on Worcester.

Perhaps having got his own way raised Digby's spirits, for soon he would hardly admit that Rowton Heath was a disaster at all, but vowed in a letter to Ormonde it was "almost a victory." Truly a miss is as good as a mile!

"If," he goes on, "His Majesty can once see his person secure from being thus daily hazarded and chased about, I see no reason why we should be at all dismayed with our many late misfortunes here, since no man can think that England divided, though the major part against the King, is able to resist Scotland and Ireland entirely for him."¹

Possibly this might have been true if Scotland and Ireland had been "entirely for him," but that was very far from being the case. Of course it was well known that there was very little love lost between the English Independents and the Scotch Presbyterians, but it did not follow that the Scots would join Montrose in spite of his victories.

Digby's next letter to Jermyn is even still more amazing. "My dear Lord, Are not these miracles of providence enough to make an atheist superstitious! For my part I profess to you I never did look upon our business with that assurance that I do now of God's carrying us through with His own immediate hand, for all this work of Montrose is above what can be attributed to mankind."²

Culpepper, the sensible Culpepper, was so infected by Digby's hopes that he suggested they might expect to win London to make up for the loss of Bristol. He suggested if Goring's men were but drawn east to join the Royal Army and backed by French and Irish help, one battle might establish them in the capital. It would really seem as if all had lost their heads and were "fey."

In this happy state of mind Digby accompanied the King to Newark. There, however, they found no sanctuary, but heard

¹ Carte, *Orig. Letters*, I. 90.

² Banks' MSS.

News of Philiphaugh

at once that Rupert with Maurice, far from accepting the King's sentence of exile, was galloping after him at his best speed to force an interview. To avoid this scandal Digby persuaded the King to continue his march northwards, and he had one night of peace at the Duke of Newcastle's magnificent Welbeck Abbey. There a council was called, but only to be told that the King would not permit them to debate whether he should advance or retire, and so they obediently agreed that the march should be continued the next day to Rotherham. As the officers were rising to carry out these orders came a knock at the door, and there stood a trumpeter whom the King had sent off long before with gracious proposals to the Scottish Presbyterians' leader: he had been kept prisoner and was only just released. The King asked eagerly had he heard of the Marquis of Montrose, and was told of the defeat at Philiphaugh and how the Marquis was practically now in flight to the North. The Presbyterian army was advancing in triumph and was already south of Newcastle.

Even Digby had nothing now to say in favour of marching North, and they could only reluctantly cancel the orders for advance and turn back to Newark. The King there announced that though it was not held advisable that he should advance, it was absolutely necessary that someone should establish communications with Montrose, and desired Marmaduke Langdale to endeavour it. In earlier days Langdale had been one of Rupert's faction, but Digby had always appreciated his gallantry, and now the pair seem to have buried their enmity, for Langdale answered the King cheerfully that he would do his best to cut his way North if the Lord Digby would come as Commander-in-Chief and allow him to serve under his orders. "All who were present," says Hyde, "stood amazed, but when the Lord Digby as frankly accepted the command they concluded it had been concerted before between the King and the two."¹

Digby told Hyde candidly the following winter (January 1646) that the violent designs of Rupert and Gerard were well known, but that he had believed if he were out of the way they would be less disposed to do public harm simply in order to satisfy their private enmity to him, and so he and the King had agreed together that he should take the first good excuse for absenting himself. He further told him that those who were weary of the

¹ Cl., *Gr. Reb.*, II. 1076.

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war believed the King would be ready for peace if it were not for Digby's influence, while in truth the King would never agree to throw up his own cause. As the blame and credit of this constancy were all laid on Digby, his being with the King robbed His Majesty of the credit of his own nobility.¹

The King doubtless wished to end the unseemly squabbles of his surroundings, but when, after telling his nephews to leave the Kingdom, he also sent Digby away, it looks a little as though he wished to see all his friends in safety before his own tragedy came to pass.

Digby, now Lieutenant-General of all the forces North of the Trent, went off with Langdale, some other gentlemen, and 1,500 horse, "and so in a moment," says Hyde, "became a General as well as a Secretary of State and marched presently to Doncaster" on his way to York. There he heard that in Sherbourne, a town two or three miles off, were a thousand foot newly raised for the Parliament, and next morning he surprised them so completely that they threw down their arms without striking a blow. Their arms were laid in Sherbourne main street in great piles, while Digby collected carriages to take them away.

But the Parliamentary Colonel Copley was near by with his forces and not at all inclined to let the matter end there. Afterward, when relating what followed, he piously explained that the wisdom of God disposed most of Digby's men to be so busy with their arms and their prisoners that they gave no thought to a new enemy. It certainly does seem little short of a miracle that Digby did not trouble to get his infantry into order. Copley's men had to cross a difficult brook and could only march along a narrow path; Langdale charged down on them with his horse, shouting, "Now we must avenge Naseby," and swept them all away in rout. They bolted through Sherbourne, where Digby's men were still unconcernedly loading the captured arms on waggons, and when the flying troops dashed by Digby's men took them for their own comrades and, throwing down the arms, ran away too!

Copley himself had fallen back on the reserves he had prudently kept behind, while Digby was now left with a mere handful of men. In the close fighting that followed Copley got within pistol-shot of Langdale and nearly killed him.² Digby was

¹ Carte, VI.

² Vicar's *Burning Bush*, 294.

Battle of Sherbourne

wounded, and the two were forced to get together the remains of their force and retire as best they could to Skipton Castle, having lost several important gentlemen and all their baggage.

"So," says Clarendon, "this 1,500 horse within a very few days were brought to nothing and the generalship of Lord Digby was at an end. The greatest misfortunes that befel that noble person usually fell out in a conjunction when he had near attained to what he could wish." The worst disaster of all was the loss of Digby's cabinet of papers, a very fair retribution for the severe remarks he had made when the King's papers were captured at Naseby. Threescore cyphers were said to have been included among these letters. The letters were read out in the House and let the Commons into all the secrets of the King's distracted negotiations with the Prince of Orange and the King of Denmark, and the promises from France and the hopes of influencing the Scots army; while also among the documents, Rupert was told by a friend, "there was a letter from the King to your Highness in answer to a letter of yours in July last when you advised him to peace and not to trust the Irish. This letter hath done you a great deal of right."

At Skipton most of Digby's scattered troops managed to rejoin him, proving that if it had not been for that unlucky panic they were strong enough to have made him master of the North.

As it was, he decided once more to try to cut his way to Montrose, but at Carlyle Sands he was met by the Parliamentary forces under Sir John Brown and finally defeated. Digby, Langdale, and the few men they could rally pushed on to Dumfries, but there they found the Cumberland hills offered only too tempting a refuge for their men, who deserted wholesale, so on the 24th of October Digby and Langdale gave up any hopes of action in Scotland and sailed from Ravenglass for the Isle of Man.

On reaching safety the two leaders signed a joint letter to the King justifying their flight.¹ They explain that although when they started they might hope to join Montrose, it had not been possible to know exactly where he was, and not till they reached Dumfries did they find out that his victories had been far north in Aberdeen, and that the Scots in force lay between

¹ Cl. MSS., 2003.

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them and the Marquis' army. It seemed to them more honourable to cross the seas with forty or fifty of their principal officers and collect troops in Ireland, and then return to do some real service, than to "scramble over the mountains where these few men that are left cannot march nor live in a body."

The men they had managed to keep with them after the defeat they had sent back to Skipton under Sir Horatio Cary.

Digby wrote to Hyde with enthusiasm of his reception in the Isle of Man, the little independent kingdom ruled by the Earl of Derby and his heroic Huguenot wife, Charlotte de la Tremouille. "Lady Derby," he wrote, "is one of the wisest and generousest persons that I have ever known of her sex."

From there he went on to Dublin, where it was pretended great forces were in readiness for England, which great forces, as usual, found excellent reasons for not leaving Ireland at all.

At this time he wrote one of the few letters to Lady Digby that have survived. She, poor lady, found it impossible to realise that even Rupert could be strong enough to drive her fascinating husband from the King's side.

MY DEAR HEART,

Your letter by Mr. Moore hath eased me of a great deal of care that I have been in ever since I never heard from you, nor of you till now, and knowing you to be at the time of my coming away in such condition whereon misapprehension of grief might be of much danger to you, you will easily imagine my disquiet. God be praised for your safe delivery and my blessing upon my new baby and the rest. I take it very ill that you wrote nothing of them. I sent you formerly (if it were possible) to get my son safe over hither, when I will send him over into France, and I persist in the same device if either you can procure him a pass, or that he may otherwise be sent with safety. As for my return to the King which you and all my friends press so earnestly, that shall be whenever I think I may be more useful to his service there than elsewhere. As for my own interest, I have received from the King even now by Mr. Moore too great testimonies of his constancy for me to distrust the power of my malicious enemies should by my absence prevail to my prejudice with him. And I cannot but very much wonder how it is possible to be so blinded with kindness to me as not to see how destructive it must be to me and to his Majesty's service for me to return at this time without an army to make me useful there. Is he in such a condition that you hope my counsels should rescue him from the misery that threatens him without any matter to work upon? Were it not a madness in me to pass through disgraces in my way to disgraces when I come there, to take upon me the blame and imputation of those

Letter to Lady Digby

misfortunes which the weakness and treachery of others is likely to bring upon him? Surely while his condition is such, you ought to think it the greatest blessing that ever befel me that have so fair a pretence to absent myself. If the King should fail in firmness towards me the loss would be his in his honour, and not mine in way of interest, for is it not evident in the condition he now tends unto, his favour is likely to be most fatal to those nearest to him unless they comply with indirect ends, which I can never do?

And lastly, sweetheart, whiles the Princes are with the King it is impossible for me to come there without making such a combustion as must overwhelm all his Majesty's affairs by the disorder of it. And over and above all, the forementioned disgraces make my unseasonable impatience to suffer my enemies near him appear the cause of all his misery. Besides that, though I am assured that the King's justice and kindness will never fail me upon the private score, who if his nephews should make the quarrel personal (as doubtless they will if I come hither whilst they are there) I could not expect nor would it profit the King to take my part against them. Therefore, my dear Soul, have patience awhile. If God have decreed his Majesty's ruin I will ruin with him too; but not hasten his ruin by my unseasonable intrusion on his business there. If it please God to preserve him I make no question but He will keep him just to me and you will see my enemies ruin one another faster than I could effect it if I were there. And if not, I make no question but by God's blessing I shall ere long appear in England with so considerable a power to serve him as shall make my enemies strike sail. I make no question but that these reasons will convince both yours and the rest of my friends imaginations and judgments. However, if you persist in the opinion for my return, in case that you send me word that the Princes are gone away, with whom believe it there is no personal contending, I shall obey the importunity of my friends rather than my own reason. In the meanwhile, if the Princes be received and remain with the King, it will not be amiss to give out, sometime after this dispatch, that I am already in England in disguise and will be such a day at Oxford, to try how it will work.

But in case you resolve to do so be sure you acquaint nobody living but him that decyphers this letter, with the dissimulations but let my nearest friends believe that I will most certainly be there such a day, and by that you will clearly discover what effect my real coming would have. But if the Princes be gone then try no tricks. I conjure you continue your kind application by the treasurer. For however he may play the Vulpone with my enemies, etc., etc.

DIGBY.

DUBLIN, *January 19, 1643.*¹

Meantime Rupert and Maurice had been steadily galloping north and getting nearly captured on the road by Colonel Rossiter,

¹ Tanner MSS., LX. 369.

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who killed many of their party and took others, so that "the Princes had to ride apace for it."¹

The King at Newark was in no pleasant position. Not only had he to bear the disaster of Sherbourne, but he had found the state of things in Newark itself little short of a scandal. The troops were drunken and mutinous and the officers kept all the pay so that the soldiers were unpaid and destitute. The King tried to enforce some discipline by removing the worst officers and reducing the pay of others, but by doing so he only increased the discontent. He proposed to make Lord Bellasis Governor and offered Willis, who was in command, a post in the Royal Guards in exchange, to which Willis replied insolently that such a removal was no better than being disgraced, and that he had no private fortune to enable him to live in such a position.

To add the last straw to the royal burdens, at this moment Rupert and Maurice appeared. The King said very little to them, asked Maurice one or two questions, entirely ignored Rupert, and so went to supper. But next day he endeavoured to quiet his nephew by issuing a proclamation clearing Prince Rupert of the charge of treason for the surrender of Bristol and with great moderation, now only calling the action "an indiscretion."

So far from the Princes being satisfied, they burst into his dining-room while he was at table, accompanied by Gerard, Willis, and about twenty other officers, complaining loudly that Willis had been removed from his place for no fault, but solely for being Rupert's friend. Gerard declared this was a plot of Lord Digby's, who was a traitor, and he would prove it, while Rupert added that Digby's defeat at Sherbourne was treason, probably a *tu quoque* for Digby's impeachment of him for the loss of Bristol.

The King, says Clarendon, was so surprised with this behaviour that he rose from the table in some disorder and went into his bedchamber, calling Sir Richard Willis to follow him, who answered aloud "that he had received a public injury and therefore he expected a public satisfaction." This, with what had passed before, so provoked His Majesty that with greater indignation than he was ever seen possessed with, he commanded them to "depart from his presence and come no more into it."

Symonds in his diary relates that the King actually pleaded

¹ *Vicar's Burning Bush*, 300.

The King and his Nephews

with his nephew : " Why do you not obey, but come to expostulate with me ? " " Because," retorted Rupert, " your Majesty is ill-informed."

" Pardon me," said the King ironically, " I am but a child ! Digby can lead me where he will ! What can the most desperate rebels say more ? "

Rupert showed no shame, but repeated his wish to go beyond seas. " Oh, nephew," replied Charles, " it is of great concernment and requires consideration " ; and Rupert reiterated that Digby had caused all this distraction. Then the King spoke his mind, retorting, " they are all rogues and rascals that say so, and in effect traitors, that seek to dishonour my best subject." " The Prince showed no reverence, but went out proudly, his hands at his sides," and so to Willis's house, where he sounded to horse.¹

In after days it came out that Willis had only kept his position to spy in Cromwell's interest ! Hardly a satisfactory friend on whose behalf to insult the fallen King.

The Princes did not after all leave that night, but with a couple of dozen of the officers made a lame apology, sending a paper to the King which hoped he would not look on their action as a mutiny, to which he answered, " He would not now christen it, but it looked very like one,"² and sent passes for them to go, which they finally did.

The report of this incident soon grew into a complete legend telling that Digby and Bellasis had drawn on Rupert and Gerard, and that the King himself had to rush between to separate them. Of course we know that Digby was not there, but the story was so much believed as to be used as an argument in the days of Charles II against standing armies and the dangers to be apprehended from their officers.³

No sooner had the Princes gone than it was decided that Newark was untenable. The indefatigable Pointz had followed the King up and was sure he had him in a ring ; but with the aid of one of the forced marches at which he was an adept the King escaped, actually marching the whole way to Oxford in two days and a night, only halting once for four hours from sheer ex-

¹ Symonds' diary is much torn at this point, as if he had wished to destroy the scandalous story.

² Cl., *Gt. Reb.*, II. 1083.

³ State Tracts, Wadham Library. Barton's *Civil Wars*.

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haustion, "the most tedious and grievous march that ever King was exercised on," says Clarendon.

Digby never saw his master again, but when Charles rode out of Oxford on that last fatal journey to surrender himself to the Scots in May 1646, one of Digby's servants, Ashburnham, had the honour of accompanying His Majesty.

NOTE.

A story is told in *The Ancestor*, XI. 80, that appears to be founded on some confusion between Sherborne in Somerset, and Digby's last fight at Sherbourne in the North before the scandalous scene at Newark in 1645.

It says that soon after Lichfield (1642) a disagreement arose between Digby and Rupert about a defeat at Sherbourne which Gerard said had happened through Digby's fault.

The Governor of the town and others supported Digby, while Rupert sided with Gerard. At last swords were drawn, but the King rushed between and parted them. Rupert, with 400 of his men, threw up their commissions, and Digby gave up his command and retired to Court, where he gained considerable influence over the King. Of course Digby did return to Court after he was wounded at Lichfield in 1642, but Rupert was very far from throwing up his commission.

VIII

THE DISTRESSFUL COUNTRY

SIDE BY SIDE with the confused current of events in England there had raged since 1641 an even madder stream of Irish politics.

Although the actors in the Irish wars and their objects in fighting were very unlike those in England, the two countries were bound to influence each other. This particular trouble in Ireland dated from the day when Strafford's strong hand was cold in death, leaving the plans he had devised but half carried out and an excellent army unemployed and unpaid. Some of the men were encouraged to take service under foreign Powers, others were hastily disbanded and wandered about, idle and hungry, to fan the irritation of their countrymen to an open flame. The explosion came in 1641 when the massacre of the English settlers was as unexpected as the Indian Mutiny, and even if some of the stories are exaggerated, the facts were dreadful enough to justify the horror and anger with which the news was received in England.

But horror and anger did not go far to reconquer Ireland or even to carry help to the English who were holding out in Dublin, Cork and other fortified towns. From the first news of the massacre in 1641 the King had appealed to Parliament for forces to restore order and rescue the loyalists. But the Houses persisted in believing that any army under the King's control would be first used against England, and would be reinforced by the Queen's co-religionists from Ireland, the very men against whom the King pretended to wish to raise an avenging force.

In this deadlock the Houses of Parliament naturally did little. They approved of the King's appointment of Lord Leicester as Lord-Lieutenant. But as they and the King issued contradictory orders, and when one said "stay" the other said "go," Lord

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Leicester rather naturally came to the conclusion of the hero of the folk-tale "To do better do nothing," and went home to Penshurst ; so he did not have much effect on the situation, and the few troops sent over either mutinied for want of pay or died for lack of the necessities of life.

The nominal rulers to whose hands Ireland had been entrusted on Strafford's death were a couple of rather frightened, very stupid Lords Justices, who tried to "muddle through," at bottom not altogether adverse to the progress of a rising that must in the end bring in a rich harvest of forfeited estates.

The Catholic rebels, encouraged by friendly envoys from Spain and Italy, were giving themselves the airs of a sovereign power and offering terms to the King as his equals. The Ulster Presbyterians were fighting very much on their own hand and kept their eyes fixed on Scotland and the policy dictated thence. The loyal Catholic gentlemen were caught between the upper and nether millstones, bullied by the Lords Justices and detested by the Confederate Catholics, while the Protestant settlers from England, so far as they survived, were counting themselves lucky if they had a bit of bread to eat from day to day and that they should be alive to eat it. They would gladly have ranged themselves under the greatest Protestant noble in Ireland, the Earl of Ormonde, but they knew that he had little power to help them, and they also feared that Court influence would oblige him to be dangerously indulgent to their Catholic enemies. Yet the Earl of Ormonde was the only man in Ireland whom all parties trusted. As a mere boy he had obliged Strafford to accept him on his own terms ; now he was a man of thirty-three, whose honour, courage, and loyalty marked him as a knight *sans peur et sans reproche*. But he was no colourless hero of romance ; his sense of humour supported him through straits which would have driven an ordinary man to despair ; his temper seemed incapable of being ruffled, for he was such a very great gentleman that he could not even see an attempted slight, but held on his serene course with possibly a more smiling face than before.

Digby, as Secretary of State, had little to do with the actual direction of Irish affairs ; he merely had to forward the commands of the King and Council. But his personal influence counted for a great deal, and his enthusiasm for the Earl of Ormonde gave

that much-trying gentleman a very useful backer in the Council at Oxford.

The sympathies of the Court were divided. Prince Rupert might be difficult to work with ; he treated the Seymours, kinsmen of a Tudor Queen, as brusquely as though they were mere country Squires ; he campaigned over the sacred soil of England as though it were like any other country to be reduced to obedience by German methods ; but he had soldierly common sense, and he had learned in the German wars to draw one clear line between Protestants and Catholics. So he told his royal uncle very candidly that if he wished to negotiate it should be with the wealthy Protestant Londoners ; they, and not the Irish, were worth the trouble of winning. He was so vehement that at last, after years of war and of scheming, in August 1645 the King was obliged to let him into secrets of the double game he was playing. "As for the Irish, I assure you they shall not cheat me, but it is possible they may cozen themselves."

Against Rupert and the Protestant party stood the Queen, who had been accustomed all her life to hear that French Huguenots and French Catholics were mere political partisans, and threw her influence on the side of negotiating with the Irish, who were believed, it does not seem to be clear why, to be rich in men and money, and who, at any rate, held the same creed as herself and all the great Powers on the Continent.

And the Queen's influence, as ever, was strongest, and without absolutely giving himself over to the Irish leaders, the King played with them, raised hopes, gave half-promises, and finally disappointed himself far more than he did the Irish.

It was a great satisfaction to Ormonde's friends when in 1642 the King acknowledged his services by making him a Marquis, and in November 1643, in spite of intrigues and obstructions, Ormonde became Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland.

The letter to Digby in which he acknowledges the King's favour was characteristic : "And my hopes to effect something worthy of so great and gracious a master . . . is much stronger that I am to receive his commands by your Lordship, whose judgment renders them so plain and directory, and into whose honour and nobleness I dare commit my apprehensions with a secure freedom."

Unfortunately the King needed more in a representative than

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loyalty and chivalry; he wanted another Strafford, and Ormonde was neither willing nor, indeed, competent to play the part. It would, of course, have been very convenient if Ormonde could have shouldered the whole responsibility of Irish affairs, to be looked on as the King's mouthpiece if successful and disowned if things went wrong. Yet the King had some reason in his demands on Ormonde; it was impossible for him to give positive commands when by the time his messenger reached Dublin the whole position might have changed.

When Digby became Secretary of State in October 1643, he wrote a sort of formal introduction of himself to Ormonde in his most elegant and flattering style :

Mr Lord,

I am confident that your servaunt and my noble friende Mr. Barrey will have represented mee to your Lordshipp as treuly I am, soe much your Servaunte; and Sir George Hambleton hath given mee soe contentful a beliefe of your Lordshipp's promesse to own and favour mee for such, that I was resolved even without the publique capacitye wherewith the King hath beene pleased to honour mee to have intrusted myselfe with the way of your Lordship's service, and even being a volunteere in the King's businesse to have sought a parte in that parte of it which principally concerns your Lordshipp, that is the affairs of Ireland. But now the place I holde of secretarye of State hath not onlye given mee a title to it, but in some sort removed from me the despaire of being usefull to your lordshipp, I doe with very much confidence address myself to your lordshipp as to a person to whom the tender of my service will not be unacceptable which I do heere make to your lordshipp with all the faithfulness and sincerity that can bee expected by a man of the greatest virtue and meritt from another the highest sensible of both which are the firm foundation of my beinge.

My Lord, your lordshipp's most humble servant,

GEORGE DIGBYE.

OXFORD, the 5 of October, 1643.

Could I have been confident of the Conveyance I should have presumed to send your lordshipp a cypher which I desire you to vouchsafe me when you shall send hither any trusty messenger.¹

After this one formal letter Digby gave rein to his feelings and hardly wrote a single despatch without interrupting himself to repeat with incoherent enthusiasm how happy he finds himself to be "so much obliged and favoured by the person whose favour and friendship I am most ambitious of."

¹ Carte, V. 476.

Reinforcements from Ireland

Indeed, now that Falkland, Digby's better genius was gone, Digby was in need of a friend. "Ned Hyde" adored and scolded him, but in that aristocratic Court it was not at once that the Chancellor of the Exchequer took a position of great dignity. With Ormonde there was a happy give and take of wit and equality, although Ormonde soon realised the wild exuberance of Digby's fancy and chaffed him affectionately but pitilessly.

Digby's great desire was to draw Hyde into this friendship with Ormonde, but it was not till exile and sorrow brought them together that Ormonde and Hyde made the alliance that grew ever stronger and deeper to the day of their death. Digby was not so slow: in a month's time from his formal letter, he was signing himself, "Your Lordship's most affectionate."

It was obvious that without waiting to make a final peace with the Catholics, it would be a great advantage to the King if some sort of armistice or cessation could be arranged which would set free for English service the troops who were serving under Ormonde against the rebels and whom Ormonde was unable to feed or pay. He had already represented to the Dublin Privy Council that as he could not fight he must needs make terms with the Irish, but if they disliked his doing so he was quite ready to carry on the war if they would raise £10,000. This they were neither able nor willing to do, so a cessation was signed on September 15, 1643, by Ormonde himself with several of his Privy Councillors and also Lords Inchiquin, Clanricarde, and Dungarvan.

Digby was at once plunged in a correspondence about the army which Ormonde could bring to England. Was it safe to leave Dublin undefended? would some of the Protestant regiments refuse to come to England and prefer to join with the Parliament troops in Ireland under Leicester's son Lord Lisle? and finally, as "little less than the necessary preservation of Ireland hath made you governor of that Kingdom, you are conceived so personally necessary also to the support of His Majesty's affairs in this (the transport of his army) that His Majesty nor all His ministers are not able at all to determine whether your presence be more essential in this kingdom or that." Ormonde's presence in Ireland might be necessary to protect the loyalists, while on the other hand was it sure that if the troops came over without him they could be trusted? So far they had been fighting against

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Catholics in defence of the Protestant religion; might they not fraternise with the Parliament's men? Perhaps the army was too small to be worthy of his command, but they could be reinforced with all the troops in Cheshire and Lancashire. In fact, the decision on all things must be left to Ormonde.

In November Digby writes in delight at hearing the wished-for troops had landed at Beaumaris. And also "to find myself so much obliged and honoured by the person in the world whose favour and friendship I am most ambitious of, the extreme value whereof I must confess to be the best title I have in any part of them."

He wrote that the Irish army had proved to be so steady and loyal that the King thought Ormonde's name as their general would suffice without his having the trouble of coming over, while flattering letters had been written to the officers to make sure of Captain Monk and the rest.

And then all these fair hopes were dashed. After a short and triumphant campaign in which the Irish army cleared North Wales and the best part of Cheshire of the enemy, Fairfax surprised them at Nantwich. They had been so pleased with their success and were so over-confident, that they were "caught as in a trap" among the deep lanes and flooded rivers, and were "compelled to yield themselves prisoners by those whom they so much despised two hours before."¹

As had been feared, a good many of them readily took service under the victor, but one taciturn young officer kept his faith and in consequence spent some time in the Tower. He was Captain Monk, a man whose surly temper got him into difficulty when serving under Ormonde, but during a visit to Oxford the King's personal charm quite won him over and he fought at Nantwich as a volunteer. The King thought so well of him as to send him a special message of thanks when he came over from Ireland. Who could have foretold that it would be owing to this Captain Monk that the King's son would one day regain his crown!

When this Protestant contingent from Ireland was lost, it appeared to the Court all the more important to come to a complete settlement with the Irish confederates and so secure the Catholic troops for the King's army. But it was impossible to

¹ Cl., *Gr. Reb.*, II. 685.

Deputations from Ireland

please all parties, and to get help at once from the Protestant nobility of Ireland and the Confederate Catholics was like asking fire and water to combine.

Some concessions must needs be made to the Irish, yet any concession might drive both Irish and English Protestants into the arms of the Parliament, and the terms were haggled over and agreed to and disowned till Ormonde was driven almost to desperation. He hated the whole business; a staunch Church and King man, he despised the religion of the Irish and treated even their leaders with chilly haughtiness. Yet the needs of the King forbade his breaking off negotiations.

The difficulties of the Lord-Lieutenant in Dublin were much increased by the delegates from all parties who crossed the sea to Oxford to try their influence at headquarters, and there Digby's reports and (Digby's) support were of great importance to him.¹

So early as 1642 four Protestant gentlemen came over from Ireland to beg for help, but they were men of too "notorious disaffection" for the King to listen to their complaints, and Digby assured Ormonde that although one of them, Sir Hardress Waller, was leaving Oxford with the consent of the King, he was not to go to his home in Munster till he had reported himself to Ormonde in Dublin; there certainly were grave suspicions against him, but unless Ormonde knew more than had been told to the King, it was not necessary to lock him up. These grave suspicions were only too well justified six years later when Waller was one of the judges who sent that same King to the block.

The Parliament sitting in Dublin, composed, of course, of none but Protestant settlers, terrified at the notion of any agreement being come to with their mortal enemies, sent over their own commissioners to protest against any terms being made with the Confederate Catholics, and Ormonde's very Protestant Privy Council in Dublin also sent their envoys to explain their views of the position. They admitted that the Catholic rebels were masters of three parts of Ireland and were much superior in power to the loyalists, yet they still refused to make the smallest concession to gain them over. Digby wrote that the demands of the Protestants must be due either to malice or madness. Ormonde could only reply helplessly that it was not possible to say whether

¹ Carte, V. 474. Cl., *Gr. Reb.*, II. 834.

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the demands of the Protestant agents represented the general sense of Irish Protestants or not, for they had no organisation to say what their real wishes were.

One of the envoys from Dublin, Percival, ventured to protest against all the disagreeable business being put on the Lord-Lieutenant, but he knew his words were wasted, for he wrote, the Oxford Council "might as well have settled Irish matters for themselves, without any envoys being sent over, for they seldom consulted any Protestants."

The light in which Protestants were looked on in Oxford is shown by a letter from Radcliffe, who says Percival would have gone in Oxford for a Roundhead, had he not been recommended by Ormonde. He was, indeed, in after days driven to side with the Roundheads as the only representatives of English government in Ireland.

This leaning of the Court towards the Irish Catholics distressed Ormonde greatly. In July¹ he wrote a dignified and forcible protest to Digby, saying he was in a desperate condition, and totally in the dark as to His Majesty's pleasure. If Englishmen in England hesitated to make terms with the Catholic Irish, how much more repugnant was it to the English in Ireland, who had suffered so much at their hands; while if he should agree to make terms and lead the Irish against the rebel Scots in the West, not ten Protestants would follow him.

The Confederate Catholics were not going to leave the field entirely free for their Protestant antagonists, and, as we have seen, sent over their own commissioners to Oxford, saying they were ready to sign a permanent peace and supply the King with £30,000 and an army, but at a price, and that price they intended to dictate themselves. They demanded the repeal not only of Poyning's law which decreed that all bills laid before the Irish Parliament must have first been approved by the English Government, but also of all laws against the exercise of the Catholic religion, and that the King should appoint a Catholic as his Lord-Lieutenant.

The King asked the Catholic envoys whether they did not think by granting their desires he should purchase Ireland with the loss of England and Scotland, and the more sober-minded of them could not deny it. Digby wrote that the King was trying

¹ Carte, VI. 153.

Ormonde's Difficulties

privately to make proposals for them that might be agreed to without scandal.

While the Catholic Commissioners were in Oxford, Ormonde was at least relieved from the necessity of negotiating with them. Digby wrote that although the King was disappointed by their proposals, it might be as well to keep them as long as possible amused in England, that Ormonde might have a chance of collecting some provisions. Indeed, famine pressed hard on Ireland, and Ormonde complained that even the provisions charitably sent by the Dutch for the poor Protestants had been commandeered for the use of the army, while Inchiquin wrote that 500 of his soldiers had run away "for want of means to subsist."

Ormonde could not fight the confederates for want of men, and yet he was blamed for having consented to a Cessation. Every important person must be bribed or flattered into some sort of agreement which only lasted till better terms were offered by the Catholics or by the English Parliament. Naturally Digby's letters at this time are chiefly occupied in soothing the ruffled feelings of the Lord-Lieutenant.¹

The letters also show the difficulties under which the King's servants and the King himself laboured. Again and again Digby assures Ormonde that he has persuaded the King not to appoint to any important office in Ireland without consulting Ormonde, and again and again he has to admit that it is so important not to offend this or that person that the King has had to grant him this or that favour.

In March 1644 Digby writes that the King was really resolved to leave the decision of Irish questions to Ormonde, so in future he will only write his own private views. But that the King would like to show encouragement to such men as Clanricarde (a loyal Roman Catholic), and had no objection to the Earl of Cork being made Lord Treasurer. This second Earl of Cork was a Protestant and had married the heiress of the Cliffords, so he was as much an English as an Irish landowner.

In May 1644 Digby writes² that the King had finally promised that Cork shall be Lord Treasurer if Ormonde wished it, and had given him a letter to take to Ormonde on the subject, but had forbidden him for the present to tell anyone else of the

¹ Carte, VI. 172.

² *Ibid.*, VI. 114, 120.

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appointment, as the hope of it might be used as a bait to one of the Irish leaders. This plan of making an appointment and keeping it secret we shall meet with again, and it is well to keep in mind that it was rather a favourite item in Charles's Irish policy.

Digby continued that he was sensible of the hard task put on Ormonde by referring the whole question of the peace of Ireland to him, but "it is the part of a gallant minister to serve his master in great straits and difficulties by easing him of those burdens that would lie too heavily upon him—as in one season the minister takes them from the master, so in another the master may ease the minister wholly of it." "You have a difficult task put upon you, 'tis true, but yet I make no doubt but it will prove a glorious one, and wherein notwithstanding all appearing hazards that might deter vulgar spirits, your excellency has nothing to fear but in the ruins of His Majesty and of monarchy itself, which I am confident you will rather perish than subsist after it."

And he winds up by assuring Ormonde that if any letters came purporting to be from the King but not signed by one of his secretaries, Ormonde must consider it only a slip of memory on the part of His Majesty. This looks a little as though the King were to have the pleasure of writing gracious promises which the Lord-Lieutenant was to have the odium of refusing. This little sentence may be remembered with a view to some of the King's later negotiations.

Digby then goes on with warm sympathy for Ormonde's difficulties, but urges it is a great point that Ormonde now needs no excuse for locking up the late Lord Justice Parsons and the other Privy Councillors. And if he will only do so he can exchange them for four important persons now in the hands of the rebels! Digby's wishes were carried out; some Councillors were imprisoned; Parsons and three others fled, and Ormonde was able to negotiate a year's Cessation of hostilities with the insurgents without being incessantly thwarted by a disloyal council.

An especially delicate question was raised by the death of the Lord President of Munster in the early days of the war. Several Protestant Munster landowners thought they had just claims to be his successor, particularly his son-in-law, Lord Inchiquin, a Protestant of the royal O'Brien family, named by the Irish "Murrrough of the burnings," from his ruthless way of

waging war. Ormonde, though he valued Inchiquin's services, thought that in order to prevent jealousy his appointment might be suspended for awhile.

And then the King, without a word to the Lord-Lieutenant, appointed a Catholic Englishman, Lord Portland. His being an Englishman of course ruined any chances of conciliating the Munster Irish, while his being a Catholic turned the Munster Protestants absolutely against him. Ormonde naturally protested, when Digby assured him that Portland should resign and be given some other place ; everything could and should be managed. But it was managed too late. Inchiquin was deeply offended and caught at the first possible excuse for leaving the King's side and offering his sword to the Parliament, on which one of the Court wrote, "The King is much troubled by Inchiquin's revolt." The poor King could not realise the temper of the proud Irish aristocracy irritated by constant slights ; neither could he realise that people could not live on loyalty when they had neither bread nor shoes.

He wrote that he had "given orders to my Lord Digby to recommend those poor people that were thrust out of their towns to your Excellency. The King is very sensible of their distressed condition." ¹

It was all very well to tell Ormonde to look after the distressed Protestants ; Inchiquin thought he was doing it more effectually by negotiating with the party in England which was backed by the rich merchants of London, and never again was Munster entirely at the King's orders. Ormonde wrote a little later that loyalists had mostly left the province, and he can still only suggest the Earl of Cork should be sent over to protect his own estates. Arthur Trevor, Ormonde's faithful friend, lost his temper with all the English Council and their underhand negotiations and secret commands, vowing besides that so many titles had lately been given away that half of the Court are lords and ended as to Ormonde's prospects, "The employment is dangerous when the employers dare not bid Godspeed to the plough. My Lord, I shall not be over-ambitious of that blessing at this time, for the Marquis of Ormonde, the Earl of Bristol, Lord Digby, Lord Cottington and the Council put the stock into your hand and stand themselves behind the hanging"—rather mixed

¹ Carte, VI. 212.

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metaphors, but they express the writer's feelings pretty plainly. But whoever spoke against him, Ormonde knew he had a steady friend in Digby, and wrote a few weeks later saying his obligations to Digby were "greater than to any man alive, and with much truth I profess that I shall be very industrious to preserve the honour of your friendship as the most free and noble I ever met with."¹ But, as usual, he ends with his fear that he may fall into some pernicious error if he is not given positive commands by His Majesty.

And yet, in the very midst of his worries, Ormonde cannot resist a joke, and describes with delight how the Irish Catholics and Ulster Scots had marched many miles to engage and then not done each other so much hurt as a sound fray at a fair might have done. Ormonde was too good an Irishman not to appreciate an honest row.

Various Irish gentlemen came over to Oxford offering to raise regiments for the King's service in Ireland—Taaf, Power, Jack Barry, and Major Dillon. The King was much pleased to recommend them to the Lord-Lieutenant, who was also pleased so long as they did not ask him for money, of which he had none. A special difficulty was raised by the arrival in Oxford of Lord Antrim. As the greatest nobleman in the North of Ireland, his lordship thought a great deal of himself, and indeed he was a man of considerable power, for, being a Catholic, he could work with the Supreme Council, while his cousins in Scotland were the powerful Clan McDonnell, so he went about boasting that he would find it the easiest thing in the world to raise an army in Ulster, slip across the narrow sea and join his kinsfolk in support of Montrose; his hardy Ulster men, he vowed, needed no commissariat, but could live on shamrocks!

But the real source of the importance of this handsome talkative young man was his wife; Antrim had been shrewd enough to marry the widow of the King's beloved friend, the Earl of Buckingham. The King had not been well pleased by the Countess's second marriage, and had no liking for Antrim, but he could not turn his back on the lady with whom he had been intimate for so many years, and in receiving the lady he had to receive her new husband, and found it hardly possible to ignore his wishes.

¹ Carte, VI. 208.

Antrim wanted to be made "Generalissimo of all the Popish party," which, Digby wrote privately,¹ "would be a scandal to his Majesty," besides raising a rival authority to Ormonde's. Digby continued that he knew Antrim very well, and if the King had listened to him, less would have been done for his lordship. But he suggests, as the Duchess of Buckingham wanted the wardship of her husband's nephew, perhaps that would be a way to please them both and do no harm, but as to that, also, Ormonde must do as he pleased.

The intrigues and discussions that arose over the question of Antrim's invasion of Scotland give a vivid idea of the way in which the unhappy King was treated as a shuttlecock by those around him. Montrose was now in Oxford, anxious to get help, or at least authority to act on his own in the West of Scotland, and Antrim was quite ready to join in the adventure, being, as Clarendon puts it, "a great undertaker."

Most of the King's Court looked on the gallant Montrose and the vapouring young Antrim alike as mere adventurers. But here Digby showed his knowledge of character, for although in Hyde's words "he was a friend to all difficult designs," he was under no delusions as to Antrim's worthlessness, while he had a great admiration for Montrose and confidence in his power to make good what he promised. Yet he realised Antrim's power both from his wealth, his name, and his religion, and what a fatal blunder it would be to offend him.

It was necessary to walk warily, but intrigue was a thing in which Digby delighted, and he soon saw there was not only a chance of backing Montrose and of using Antrim, but also of doing a good turn to his friend Daniel O'Neill, against whom it may be remembered the King had a steady prejudice dating from the time of Strafford.

It so happened that O'Neill was actually the only man who could reconcile the jarring elements in Ireland. Hyde says, "whether by alliance or friendship or long acquaintance O'Neill had more power with the Earl of Antrim than any man; and by the ascendant he had in his understanding and the dexterity of his nature he could persuade him very much;"² and it was equally well known that the Marquis of Ormonde loved O'Neill very well. Digby wrote with splendidly mixed metaphor, that

¹ Carte, V. 529.

² Cl., *Gl. Reb.*, II. 917.

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if Antrim's boasted expedition did come off and O'Neill could be sent with it as ballast, he might steer Antrim out of the way of mischief.

So Digby began diplomatically by telling the King he had thought of an expedient that might relieve him in his perplexity concerning Antrim, and then suggested sending O'Neill to smooth matters between him and Ormonde. Antrim, it was well known, had "behaved himself so indiscretely towards the Marquis and had so unhandsomely disobliged him" that it was hardly possible for Ormonde to speak to him, but O'Neill might persuade him to overlook his reasons of offence and also might do a good deal with the Confederate Catholics through his Uncle Owen Roe O'Neill, who was quite the most important of the Irish leaders; so that Daniel would be acceptable to all parties. Of course, Digby explained, in undertaking such a mission, O'Neill would be sacrificing his own money and comfort for the King's advantage, but it was just possible that he might be willing. The King then sent for O'Neill, who listened to the plans for Antrim "as a thing he had never thought of," but answered readily enough that he believed Lord Antrim would have no difficulty in collecting and sending over an Ulster army, but that he saw three difficulties in the way of success. One, that Antrim had so unhandsomely disobliged Ormonde that they could scarcely work together; two, that the Irish leaders might interfere with troops being sent out of the country; and third—which he mentioned with hesitation—that he much feared "Antrim had not the steadiness of mind to go through with such an undertaking."

The King replied as Digby had prompted, but when he proposed that O'Neill should go with Antrim, "O'Neill seemed wonderfully surprised with the proposition, and in some disorder (which he could handsomely put on when he would) said he would never disobey any commands of his Majesty, but recapitulated all the difficulties of the matter, and urged Antrim's pride, levity, and weakness, and his own wish to be in England to follow the King on his next campaign." Naturally the more he hung back the more eager for his help the King grew, and at last he begged O'Neill to talk the matter over with Digby. Now at last Digby had got all the strings in his hand, and he spoke very impressively to His Majesty of all the expense and inconvenience he was asking O'Neill to undertake; for O'Neill, as the King had no money,

Antrim Made Marquis

would have to engage in the expedition at his own charge, and finally said if O'Neill had some position granted to him by the King it would be acknowledging his service besides greatly increasing his authority.

The King was still averse to giving O'Neill a place, and showed himself so wearied with Digby's persistence, that Digby could only make a last effort, and with a countenance as if he thought His Majesty much in the wrong said, "he doubted His Majesty would too late repent his aversion in this particular," and after again reminding His Majesty how greatly he was in O'Neill's debt, wound up by proposing he should be made a Groom of his Bedchamber the hour he left Oxford, so that he might depart with the title and the King might very likely never see him again. The King on this gave way, and O'Neill got his office, and so far from the King never seeing him again, he was back at Court the following summer !

Digby having succeeded in his plans, it was now the turn of the Duchess of Buckingham, and she used all her powers of persuasion to get a new title for her new husband. The King could not say "No" to the Duchess, and Antrim went back to Ireland a Marquis.

After all this vapouring, so far from working miracles, Antrim never even crossed to Scotland. But he did send his kinsman, young Colkitto, who joined Montrose, as all readers of Scott will remember, and helped him to win the victory of Inverlochy and very nearly to capture the great Argyle himself.

One of Ormonde's friends wrote to him from Court on the 25th of March (1644) that the expedition of Antrim and O'Neill was concluded to be only "a bragg," and since agents from the Confederate Irish had come to Oxford, Antrim and O'Neill "were fallen two shillings in the pound !" Digby only assured Ormonde that he knew Antrim too well to expect miracles from him, but he really thought he might be of use somewhere, though not as Generalissimo, for the Commission was already made out constituting Ormonde himself General of all troops in the Northwest. But it was all important to induce the confederate Irish to continue to observe the cessation of hostilities to which they had agreed, to prevent the Scottish and Irish armies of Ulster from invading England, and to persuade the principal Catholic Irish to invade Scotland instead.

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It was also rumoured, Digby wrote, that the great Duke of Argyle and General Leslie were going to cross to recruit men among the Scottish settlers in Ulster. Would it be possible to send a ship to intercept them? Such a prize would have indeed gone far towards ending the war, but Argyle and Leslie knowing better than to risk themselves in wild-goose chases or wild-goose voyages, never left Scotland.

Ormonde was not pleased by the choice of the messengers who carried over the King's letters. Some were sent by one Sir Brian O'Neill, a cousin of Dan's. Ormonde wrote that he was a person of small esteem and not at all gracious with English in Ireland or Protestants, "neither is he a man with whom I dare otherwise deal than at a stave's end." It was not very long before a letter from this Brian O'Neill was intercepted in which he showed his true colours, asserting frankly that Lord Ormonde was a knave and Daniel O'Neill another, while Lord Cork's kinsman, Jack Barry, was also quite ready to play the knave.

Digby hastened to assure Ormonde that Brian O'Neill was not a messenger of his selection, the error, if error the choice was, must lie with His Majesty; Digby had meant to send Lord Cork's cousin Dick Power, a Munster Protestant. Yet another example of the King's unhappy genius for pitching upon the wrong confidant. When O'Neill's true character came out, Digby's only comment was (May 1645) that he had thought Brian had more wits, if not honesty. The Court was, indeed, incapable of judging which agreeable Irishman was to be trusted and which to be suspected, and the infatuation of all in Oxford for the Irish Catholics made Ormonde's task a heavy one.

Lord Taaf, a Catholic nobleman, however, who carried over messages from the King, was another sort of man. Digby wrote that the King would gladly favour him, but that he was apt to be discontented and unreasonable. Most people who were doomed to negotiate with the King ended in that state of mind!

The same story is repeated again and again through the four years of negotiation with Ireland, and in 1645 the suspicions, the protests, and the entreaties are just what they were in 1641—only more so! The Queen continued her pressure in favour of some ruler for Ireland who should not be such a stiff Church-

Negotiations for Peace in Ireland

man as Ormonde, and Digby wrote very strongly to her favourite Jermyn emphasising the impossibility of giving in to the Irish demands without losing all the King's Protestant subjects, "and whereas you wrote that perhaps my Lord Ormonde is not the fit person to conclude that business, but that the management of it should be remitted to the Queen, I am much afraid the expectations of that in the Irish hath much retarded the hoped for issue of the business. The utmost extent of my Lord of Ormonde's power to grant was the suspension of Poyning's Act of the Penal Laws (against Popish practices) and the allowing the Papists some chapels in private places for the exercise of their religion. But you may not take notice that he had so large a power, for happily he hath obtained a peace upon a better bargain." ¹

Ormonde's remonstrances at last had some effect; Digby answered by sending some directions as to the peace negotiations, and the King himself wrote explaining it was for the sake of the loyal Protestants that he was trying to make up with the Irish as he had no other way of helping them: that if the King was driven to expedients which he did not like, his servants also must expect to be driven to the most extreme remedies. It was true His Majesty admitted he did promise that the Lord-Lieutenant should join with the Catholics against the Ulster Scots, "but, if the Scots submit not, they would be common enemies, and may be treated as such," but he reiterates that it is useless for Ormonde to ask for "precise commands." "'Tis true," he ended, "you have a hard task put upon you, but such difficulties and hazards all His Majesty's faithful ministers must wrestle with proportionally in their several spheres, and there is none who ought to be so confident of His Majesty's adhering to him and his proceedings, if God prosper him, as your Excellency may be, and if his affairs miscarry I am persuaded there is none that will less repent to have set up his rest with monarchy nor will be able better to struggle with the hazards of it." He added that a commission had been sent to make Lord Clanricarde commander in Connacht, but Ormonde was to use or suppress it as he thought best. In fact Ormonde was only given a nominally free hand when anything disagreeable was to be done.

But the next letter from the King himself must have been some compensation to Ormonde's loyal soul.

¹ Ascot, August 27th, Warb., III. 158.

The Distressful Country

I know, Ormonde, that I impose a very hard task upon you, but if God prosper me you shall be a happy and glorious subject; if otherwise, you shall perish nobly and generously with him who is your constant and faithful friend,

CHARLES R.

In July 1645 the King wrote again, for once stating clearly what he wished done. That where the Irish were the majority in a parish he was willing they should have their own chapels, but "I will rather choose to suffer all extremity than ever to abandon my religion, and to that effect I have commanded Digby to write to their agents."¹

On the 1st of August² Digby writes repeating what he had already said four years before to Lord Muskerry and the other Catholic gentlemen who had come as a Commission to Oxford, and remonstrating with them for disappointing the expectations they had then raised, considering that the King had given Ormonde commands to comply with their wishes as far as reason or conscience would allow. But it seemed to him incredible that they should still insist on having the churches given over for their public Catholic worship when the permission would both destroy the King and ruin them, as it was in defence of his religious principles that the King had undergone the extremity of the war, so he would rather join with the Scots or any other Protestants than hazard that religion.

Two letters were dictated by the King to Digby on the same day "At Beaston Castle on our march Southward." It seems probable that only one of them was to be shown to the Dublin Council, for while one urges the need of making peace for the sake of the loyal Protestants, the second authorises Ormonde to choose and appoint officers and magistrates when the peace has been made.

Then Ormonde wrote again saying decidedly and finally that it was not possible to conclude a treaty without His Majesty's final directions, as they were really at a deadlock. It would be dangerous to make peace against the advice of the Council in Dublin, and no peace would be accepted by the Irish unless Poyning's Law were suspended. The King answered decidedly and commanded Ormonde to make peace, Council or no Council.

Dan O'Neill wrote that he had done his best to persuade the

¹ Cardiff, Carte, VI., July 31st.

² Carte, VI. 309.

Ormonde Reaches his Limit

King to send commands that would satisfy Ormonde, but the King persisted in throwing all responsibility on him. "You are to stand or fall by what is good in your own eyes," that is all that "can be hoped from our cautious councillors among whom I reckon not Lord Digby. Him I find free and faithful to the end we all intend, without reservation, and to walk in these affairs of Ireland single."

"I am not able to give you any advice more than to repeat old David's counsel, "Put not your trust in Princes, and so forth."

Very reluctantly Ormonde realised that his taking the responsibility did not mean he was free to follow his own judgment, and at last he yielded to the royal pressure and wrote to Digby that he was preparing to negotiate a peace with the Irish, or at the least a more prolonged cessation of hostilities. Nevertheless, he humbly but decidedly warns His Majesty that he has little hope the peace will be to His Majesty's honour or for the just and reasonable satisfaction of his Protestant subjects.

This letter showed the King that, loyal and obedient as Ormonde was, there were lengths to which he would not go, and finding him so unmanageable the King before long chose a more suitable tool.

IX

MY LORD OF GLAMORGAN

AFTER THE DEFEAT of Naseby it became more and more obvious that the King must get help wherever he could find it, and as there was a point beyond which Ormonde would not go in negotiating with the leaders of the Irish Catholic Army, the King decided to send over a special envoy to manage the business as he wished it done.

To have any success such an ambassador must be a Catholic ; it was also desirable that he should be a man of suitable dignity and position, and he must be trusted to keep absolute secrecy about his mission, for if any party in England or Scotland or the loyal Protestants of Ireland got an inkling that the King was negotiating directly with the confederate Catholics, hardly one of his soldiers or servants would have stayed by him.

Even if a Catholic of high birth and stainless fidelity could be found, it was also necessary that he should be rich and able to pay his own expenses, as the King had not a penny to give him.

One man only could fulfil all these conditions, Henry Somerset, Lord Herbert. A descendant of John of Gaunt, he was the eldest son of the millionaire old Marquis of Worcester, who kept almost royal state in Raglan Castle. Herbert was a remarkable man, a devout Catholic, brave and generous ; he was so romantically loyal that for the King to wish a thing, proved the thing to be good and wise. But Herbert was more than a loyal subject. He was a man of intellectual capacity and scientific attainments. He was undoubtedly the first discoverer of the use of steam, but he sought out so many other inventions, some strange and some absurd, that men of his own time and of succeeding generations have never been able to decide whether he was a genius or a charlatan. It is clear that neither Ormonde nor Digby took him very seriously.

His character was enigmatic, and so was his mission. No one

Promises to Glamorgan

but himself and the King knew the exact scope of the powers entrusted to him. Herbert was told he might keep his credentials an entire secret or show them to Ormonde as he thought best; while Ormonde, who knew some sort of negotiations were to be opened with the Irish, was warned that the Dublin Council must know nothing of the matter. Everywhere was mystery, and no one was to be entirely trusted.

The danger and the responsibility were immense, and Herbert's payment was to be in proportion.

On the 1st of April (ominous date !) 1644, Herbert received the first-fruits of his reward—a patent for his creation Baron Beauford of Caldecott and Earl of Glamorgan, which titles were for the present to be kept secret, so this grant was not passed in the ordinary official way, but was privately sealed by Glamorgan himself and Endymion Porter, who had already more than once done the same job for the King. Glamorgan was also promised in the future the title of Duke and the hand of Princess Elizabeth for his son, with a dowry of £30,000. If these rewards were not castles in the air they were princely, but the services demanded in return were extravagant. He was to be Commander-in-Chief of the Army which he was to persuade the Irish to supply, reinforced by another one which it was hoped to raise in England, and a third to be sent over by the friendly Powers on the Continent.

Besides this military command, he was to be "General of the Fleet," as soon as that came into existence, and, in fact, to be and do everything that Ormonde was too scrupulous to undertake. He actually was given authority to supersede Ormonde if he should find it necessary ! Further, to help him to carry out all these schemes, he was supplied with blank patents of nobility ready sealed, which he was to distribute to the Irish he wished to win over. He was also empowered to treat with the Pope and Catholic Princes, carrying blank forms signed by the King for the purpose.

And then, unable to be true even to the chosen champion to whom he had delivered unstinted powers, Charles wrote to Ormonde that Herbert's "honesty and affection to my service will not deceive you, but I will not answer for his judgment" !

Dr. Gardiner, in describing Digby's promotion to be Secretary of State after Falkland's death, says : "In Digby, Charles had a man to whom he could confide secrets of which it was well to

My Lord of Glamorgan

keep the honourable secretary, Nicholas, in profound ignorance." ¹ But there was no one, unless possibly the Queen, to whom Charles confided all his secrets; one confidence was made to one man and another to someone else; the clues to all these tangled skeins were in the King's hands alone, and that, he imagined, was the acme of statecraft. Digby, certainly, was not taken into the secrets of Herbert's mission, and was deeply offended when he discovered that he himself was not the King's only confidential envoy.

Herbert, or Glamorgan, as he was now called, might be willing to take royal promises as payment for his hairbrained embassy. Unfortunately the Irish were much too shrewd to be satisfied with words, while the mere suspicion that the King was making promises to them filled England with indignation. The King had to admit to Rupert that he was letting the Irish leaders "cosin themselves," but Ormonde was so alarmed at the possibility of such concessions being made to the Irish, that he begged leave to resign his post, and many modern historians believe that the suspicions of the King's intrigues with the Catholics gave the last blow to his cause in England.

After many delays and difficulties, culminating in a shipwreck off the coast of Lancashire, Glamorgan reached Dublin in July 1645, and soon after went to the headquarters of the Irish at Kilkenny. Happily for Ormonde, Glamorgan was quickly followed by Digby, so the harassed Lord-Lieutenant was not left alone to cope with the King's mysterious envoy. Although Glamorgan was known to have special powers, Digby's position as Secretary of State authorised him to speak actually in the King's name, and so to share the responsibilities of Ormonde.

Further, in these perplexing times, Digby's hopefulness and self-confidence made him a tower of strength, and in Ormonde's deepest moments of depression Digby's wit never failed to waken an answering flash. Digby became Ormonde's companion in hunting parties and military expeditions, and the two worked together in entire agreement and content.

Warm as had been the friendship started by their correspondence, now that he had really spoken with Ormonde, Digby's enthusiasm bubbled over in a letter to Hyde, when, after his describing the dangers that had attended his flight from England, he goes on: "I could not have repined at anything that hath

¹ *Great Civil War*, 246.

given me the happiness of so particular a knowledge and friendship with the Marquis of Ormonde, who, if I can judge at all of men, is not only the wisest young man, but the most steady, generous, and virtuous person that I have ever known. I conjure you, as you love virtue, and as you love me who have so little share of it, build carefully, by your diligent application, upon those grounds which I have laid for a friendship between you ; for indeed I love him so much as I cannot be at rest till we make up the triangle equal on all sides to that perfection wherewith I aim." Hyde grimly commented that Digby's high spirits were natural, as Digby always believed that misfortune could be turned to advantage, and now decided that it was quite fortunate that he had had to fly from England, as in Ireland "he had a stage upon which he could act wonders." "The noble person quickly took it on himself to say anything in the King's name, and the Lord-Lieutenant was steered by him."

All this time Glamorgan was at Kilkenny, and whether he made even greater concessions than he had authority for, or whether the Irish had begun to realise that they must either take the King's side or go down, the negotiations went on merrily, and a treaty was drawn up which Glamorgan signed on his own authority without reference to the Lord-Lieutenant or the Secretary of State, who were still negotiating with the Catholics on their own account !

Ormonde had already promised more toleration to the Catholics than existed in any Protestant country but Holland, but Glamorgan gave not toleration but equality. In fact, in the contemptuous words of Mark Pattison : "The Irish had obtained Home Rule in the widest extent, release from the Oath of Supremacy, and the right to tie their ploughs to the tail of the horse."

It must be remembered that the question of the surrender of Church property had not arisen when Glamorgan received his directions from the King, so in promising that he undoubtedly acted on his own responsibility. For though the King was willing that the Catholics should build chapels, he absolutely refused to allow them the enjoyment of the existing churches. As Dr. Gardiner says : "There is always something arbitrary in the selection of a limit to concessions, but that limit had been reached by Charles." ¹

¹ *History of the Great Civil War*, III. 34.

My Lord of Glamorgan

After he had granted all these concessions to the Irish, Glamorgan did indeed write to Ormonde urging him to meet the Irish demands in every way for which he could get authority, but he omitted to mention that he himself had already pledged the King's credit for all the concessions Ormonde had ever heard of, and more to boot !

Whether Glamorgan believed the King would approve of all that he had done, whether he hoped to force the King's hand, whether he was talked over by the Irish, will never be known. But he believed he had won all that he wanted for the royal cause, while the Irish leaders were satisfied that their religious and political freedom was gained. Ormonde had introduced Glamorgan to them as one "on whose favour with the King and innate nobility he could entirely rely" ;¹ so although the treaty had not been submitted to Ormonde and his Council, no doubts seem to have been felt by the Irish Council, and all that was now needed was a fleet of transports to convey the army it had granted either to Wales or Cornwall, and some men-of-war to act as convoys. Then, at the moment when all was most hopeful, arrived Rinucini, a special Nuncio from the Pope, a messenger of calamity whom Ormonde afterwards dubbed "the stormy petrel." When this pompous and swaggering prelate passed through Paris, neither Mazarin nor Henrietta Maria had received him ; but being ignorant of politics and heedless of anything but his own Italian point of view, he arrived in Ireland posing as a sort of special Providence sent to uphold the Catholic faith and bring back heretical Great Britain to the fold. Whether it came back under a Stuart King was a matter of little or no importance to him. The interference of such men as Ormonde and Digby in the Holy War was not to be tolerated, while Glamorgan, Clanricarde, and the few intelligent Irish leaders were to be taught their proper place and reduced to proper obedience.

Yet the danger of losing Chester, the most important port for Irish trade, was still so clear to the Irish leaders that, in spite of the Nuncio, they agreed to give Glamorgan 3,000 men at once. It was in order to get formal leave to command this force and to persuade Ormonde not to make the conditions public that Glamorgan hurried up to Dublin on Christmas Eve.² As he had in his pocket, not only the King's commission to

¹ D.N.B.

² Gardiner, *Hist. Gr. Civil War*, III. 40.

Scene in the Dublin Council

command these troops, but also leave if need be to supercede Ormonde, he was behaving in a very gentlemanlike manner in trying to gain his approval.

Unluckily for Glamorgan, not only had the Parliament intercepted correspondence on the subject from Ireland so early as the August before, but a complete copy of the treaty had been found on the body of the "Popish pretended Archbishop of Sligo," who was killed in a skirmish, and the copy had been brought to Dublin. So when Glamorgan arrived there on Christmas Eve his host must have been at some trouble to receive him with cordiality. Christmas Day, however, was duly observed ; but on December 26th the Privy Council was called together, and Glamorgan was arrested and brought before it under guard, apparently very much surprised at his treatment, and still more so when Digby rose and accused him of high treason and forgery. Glamorgan retorted that he had done nothing without the privity of the Lord-Lieutenant. The ultra-Protestant members of the Council pricked up their ears, for they were only too ready to be suspicious of the Lord-Lieutenant. With his usual unruffled dignity Ormonde answered that he had transacted nothing without communicating it to the Council, but he might be excused for not having acquainted them with this underhand practice, as upon his honour this was the first he ever heard of it ! And then, turning to Glamorgan, he said it was only one man's word against another, and asked, "can his Lordship produce any writing under my hand which in prudence you ought to have demanded to excuse you to the King, my Master." Glamorgan admitted that he had no evidence save a sealed paper that he had entrusted to the Lord-Lieutenant. The Council became more excited, and for a while Ormonde could remember nothing about this important packet, but after a little he recalled that the Earl had indeed given him a paper, but had put him on his honour not to break the seal till he himself had returned to England for fresh directions from the King. He reminded Glamorgan that he had seen him put the paper away in the right-hand drawer of his desk, "and there it lives," and giving his keys to Sir Paul Davis, the Clerk of the Council, he added, "and there you shall find it." Davis left the room, and "the Council," says Carte, "sat silent, full of thought." Digby, who was aghast at the whole affair, betrayed his agitation ; no one but Ormonde kept his usual composure.

My Lord of Glamorgan

At last Davis came back with an unopened letter, and Ormonde, not touching it, asked him to be responsible for breaking the seals. The suspense was at its height when Sir Paul drew out a paper covered "with many hundred figures of cartwheels, pot-hooks, stars, demi-circles, and such hieroglyphics!" The Lord-Lieutenant could not forbear smiling as he asked the Council to assist him with their advice in so intricate a matter. The paper passed round the circle till it reached Glamorgan, who, after he had looked at it, confessed with some confusion that he had forgotten to leave the key to this cypher with the Lord-Lieutenant!

The most suspicious of the Council could not but be satisfied of Ormonde's non-complicity, and then Digby sprang up and impeached Lord Glamorgan, vowing that any pretended authority from His Majesty must be either forged or surreptitiously gained, or that Glamorgan had disregarded the limitations governing his commission. Probably Digby's keen wit had hit the mark in making the last suggestion, but it mattered little what Glamorgan had or had not done. It was necessary on the instant to silence the suspicions of the Council and save the King's credit, so Digby continued with vehemence that His Majesty, "even to redeem his own life and the lives of his Queen and children, would not grant to the confederates the least piece of concession so destructive both to his regality and religion."

No wonder that Digby spoke vehemently. He confessed afterwards that he believed if the Council had thought he approved of such articles they would have taken him by the neck and thrown him out of the window!

After hearing Digby's speech, the Council could only commit Glamorgan to close custody, and next day he was again brought before them and closely examined. He declared he had only done that for which he had sufficient warrant, but the King was bound by nothing that he had promised, and yet his own honour and conscience were clear!

Such a nightmare of confusion left Ormonde and Digby helpless. Hyde wrote to Nicholas¹ that he was confident Lord Digby knew nothing of Lord Glamorgan's mission to Ireland, yet Digby must have had a dreadful suspicion that Glamorgan had some foundations for his claims, for he admitted to Nicholas that it was almost impossible that any man should be so mad as

¹ March 7, 1647, Cl. MSS., 2462.

Glamorgan Impeached

to enter into such an agreement without powers from His Majesty.¹ Hyde seems to have shared these fears, for he also wrote to Nicholas in very unwonted excitement. "I fear there is very much in that transaction of Ireland, both before and since, that you and I were never thought wise enough to be advised within. Oh, Mr. Secretary! those stratagems have given me more sad hours than all the misfortunes of war which have befallen the King, and look like the effects of God's anger towards us."²

Digby, as Secretary of State, was naturally furious that Glamorgan should claim to have a commission signed without his knowledge. And Ormonde's dignity was grievously ruffled. He wrote complaining, "those confederates were publickly treating with me, the Lieutenant, as His Majesty's commissioner, and during the same time with the Earl of Glamorgan, and had entertained a Nuncio from the Pope! . . . And how comely it is that such treaties with foreigners should be held by them at the same time they are in treaty with His Majesty's commissioner, we humbly submit to His Majesty's high wisdom."

Ormonde sent a formal report to Nicholas signed by all the Council³ saying, "We confess we were struck with most wonderful horror and astonishment to find so sacred a Majesty so highly scandalised and dishonoured, and the perplexity and trouble of mind were much increased in that we found many copies of the writing dispersed into several hands." It appeared, however, that the copies all differed in wording, and that the agreements had never been sealed by Lord Muskerry, one of the most important of the leaders of the Moderate Irish.

Glamorgan eagerly explained⁴ that he had merely declared the King's intention of making him Ormonde's successor in order "to endear myself to some, the better to do His Majesty's service. It is no meaning of mine but to keep your Excellency in during your life and not to pretend to it, or anything in discrimination of your Excellency's honour or profit."

When anything went wrong Digby was always the first person to be suspected, and in this extraordinary state of affairs all his enemies hastened to lay the blame, not on Glamorgan, but on the Secretary of State, who had disowned and arrested him!

¹ Leland, III. 268.

² Cl. S.P., II. 337.

³ Carte, VI. 333, January 1646.

⁴ Glamorgan to Ormonde Dirck, p. 139.

My Lord of Glamorgan

Archbishop Williams wrote to Ormonde: "We be all lost in Wales by this business between you and my Lord of Glamorgan. . . . Rupert is in great enmity with Digby. The oculist (probably a cypher for Lord Astley) does likewise lay much blame on the said Lord because of Glamorgan his business, and has put us all here to desperation. . . . Sir Nicholas Byron reports Digby to be the cause of our misery, that Glamorgan has done nothing but with your consent and the King's." ¹

No wonder Digby wrote half-bitterly, half-jestingly, to Hyde: "Let me ask you according to the laws of policy: have I not carried my body swimmingly, who before being so irreconcilably hated by the Puritan party have thus seasonably made myself as odious to the Papists? Well! My comfort is that the very few honest men in the world will love me the better, and while I do the part of a man of integrity and honour I am willing to trust God for the rest." ²

The King wrote at once entirely disowning his unlucky envoy. It was to Ormonde, he declared, that secret instructions had been given; it was Ormonde who was to grant what it might be dangerous at present to make public. It really was wonderful that the King himself did not get confused when he was issuing secret instructions to so many different people! "It is possible," he ends, "we might have thought fit to have given unto the said Earl of Glamorgan such credentials as might give him credit with the Roman Catholics, being very confident of his affection and obedience. We had not much regard to his abilities." ³

A letter from Digby to Nicholas reiterates the dismay with which he and Ormonde had heard Glamorgan's story. He tells "my good Brother" of "the unfortunate madness, for I can give it no other name, of my Lord of Glamorgan." . . . At first he and Ormonde could only think the rebels had forged the article, but then "there being some kind of formal authorisation vouched for in the article," they decided that less than the arrest of the Earl would not "vindicate His Majesty loud enough." He confesses the thought of losing the 3,000 men promised by Glamorgan had disposed them to delay, but they found the troops were not intended to move till the King had performed the conditions, which frustrated their hopes of relieving

¹ Forwarded by Lord Conway, Jan. 1646, Dom. S.P.

² Cl. S.P., II. 199.

³ Carte, VI. 347.

English Catholics' Resentment

Chester. Negotiations with the Irish were still going on, and there were still hopes of getting to Chester, or possibly the Irish extremists might "break it so foully on their side as to divide from them the most considerable of their party." "I believe you will be as much startled as I was to find the Signet mentioned on my Lord of Glamorgan's transactions, but he now pretends to have some kind of authority under the King's pocket seal, which I believe to be as false as I know the other."

He encloses a letter from Glamorgan to his wife ; these poor ladies' letters were as ruthlessly impounded and sent to Parliament as any State Papers :

MY DEAREST HEART,

When I consider thee a woman as I think I know you are, I fear lest you should be apprehensive, but when I reflect you are of the House of Thomond, and that you were once pleased to say these words unto me, that I should never in tenderness to you desist from doing what in honour I was obliged to do, I grow confident. . . . I need not tell you I am guilty of nothing that may testify one word of disloyalty. Were I among the King's enemies you might fear, but being only a prisoner among his friends and faithful subjects . . . did you but know how well and merry I am. . . . My right honourable accuser my Lord Digby will be at last restified and conformed in the good opinion he is pleased to say he ever had of me hitherto . . . and indeed did so wrap up the bitter pill of the impeachment of suspicion of High Treason in so good words as that I swallowed with the greatest ease in the world.¹

This is certainly not the letter of a man in fear of his life.

The complications were necessarily increased by the effect Glamorgan's arrest had on the English Catholics. Digby did his best to soothe them by a letter sent through his kinsman and secretary Walsingham, who was a Catholic. "I must not conclude without telling you that I believe the accident here of my Lord Glamorgan and my party to his prosecution will at first have allayed me much with your friends. But when matters shall be rightly understood, you may assure them that if His Majesty's service had not obliged me to it, yet in relation to their preservation I ought to have done it, and without it, it would have been impossible either for the King to favour them, or for me to serve them, so far as a good and firm Protestant may do, within which bounds they contributing roundly and heartily to my master's service shall very boldly appear in the procuring them all

¹ Mant 17, Pamph. Ashm., 992, Bodley.

My Lord of Glamorgan

first favour both here and in England. As for the peace of this kingdom, I make no question but it shall suddenly be brought to a happy conclusion, and my Lord Glamorgan not disabled by anything that is done, to serve the King in what he hath means to do."¹ This letter was intercepted by the Parliament and printed.

The King's letter to the Queen is perhaps the most miserable thing in the whole business.² "I believe I did well in disavowing Glamorgan so far as I did. I find that Sir E. Nicholas hath made them apprehend that I had disavowed my hand, but I assure thee I am very free from that in the understandings of all men here, for it is taken for granted the Lord Glamorgan neither counterfeited my hand nor that I have blamed him for more than for not following his instructions." Shortly after, the King wrote to Glamorgan himself the most straightforward letter of the series. "I must clearly tell you, both you and I have been abused in this business, for you have been drawn to consent to conditions much beyond your instructions. . . . If you had advised with my Lord-Lieutenant, as you promised me, all this had been helped."

Long afterwards, when Charles II sat on the English throne, Glamorgan wrote to Hyde about the whole incident, reasserting that his powers for treating with the Pope and other sovereign princes were purposely left blank so that "the King might have a starting hole to deny the having given such a commission, if excepted against by his own subjects, leaving me as it were at stake, who for his Majesty's sake was willingly to undergo it, trusting to his word alone." Well might Glamorgan and his generous old father echo Strafford's exclamation: "Put not your trust in Princes!" The King sent private directions that no punishment should be inflicted on Glamorgan, and Ormonde made a semi-apology to him in April 1646, saying he was "much joyed to find the accidents fallen out concerning your lordship have not left any impression on you to the prejudice of the real affection you give me leave to bear to you."³

And so the matter must rest, and every one will draw his own conclusions.⁴

¹ Tanner MSS., LX. 369.

² Gardiner, *Hist. Rev.*, 1887, p. 687.

³ Leland, III. 283, note.

⁴ The Glamorgan question is fully discussed in the *Historical Review*, 1887, by Dr. Gardiner; also in *Hist. Gt. Civil War*, III. chap. xxxix, and in Lady Burgeleere's *Life of Ormonde*.

Digby at Kilkenny

And after all these accusations and protests, suddenly the scene changed, and like a transformation in a pantomime Glamorgan was set at liberty, treated with the utmost confidence, and requested to go back to Kilkenny and continue his negotiations with the Irish ! Possibly Ormonde thought Glamorgan was personally safer with the Irish than within reach of the Council ; possibly his loyal heart felt it better not to go deeper into the question of the King's actions. But it seems on the whole that both the Lord-Lieutenant and Digby decided to look on Glamorgan as a negligible quantity ; they made jokes to each other about him and left him to go his own way, allowing him all the rope he might need to hang himself.

As Glamorgan's negotiations were now quite set on one side by the King's party, the Lord-Lieutenant decided that Digby should try his hand, and he set off to Kilkenny where the Council of the Confederate Irish were sitting in Ormonde's own black marble castle. Digby could not but have great hopes of convincing the more aristocratic Catholic leaders, who many of them had only joined the rebels under pressure ; the Butlers, though Catholics, were Ormonde's cousins ; Lord Castlehaven, Lord Muskerry, Lord Clanricarde, would take the same views of national politics that any other gentlemen might do, and were not at all disposed to be tools in the hands of a fanatical Italian.

By this time the position in England was desperate. The King was unable to defend Oxford, and in a few weeks was driven to surrender himself to the Scots. The Prince of Wales had fled to the Scilly Islands, whence he soon had to move on to Jersey. Pendennis Castle held by "Arundel of Trevoze, Game to his toes," and Raglan under the gallant old Marquis of Worcester, were the only fortresses that still flew the King's flag. It does not seem very clear what the Irish could do even if they rallied unanimously to the King's help ; still, as the Scots army carried great weight at Westminster, it did not seem quite impossible that as the ballad prophesied, "An Irish game might win an English trick." Anyhow, Digby, full of confidence in his own silver tongue, plunged eagerly into the congenial atmosphere of intrigue and adventure.

He wrote at once on his arrival at Kilkenny to report to Ormonde all his doings.¹

¹ April 3, 1646, Carte, VI. 362.

My Lord of Glamorgan

"I arrived here yesterday about two of the clock in the afternoon. I was met out of town by my Lord of Muskerry, by Owen O'Neill, and by Colonel Butler, my Lord Mountgarret's brother, and some others. Soon after their leaving me at my lodgings, I was visited by all that I think are in the town of the Supreme Council, whom I find so passionately affected with our design that I am likely to be their great favourite by it, insomuch as I think my Lord of Glamorgan grows jealous of my supplanting him in the favour of these *twisfogs*. Whate're the matter is, his lordship is in great indignation against me, and went out of town half an hour before I came into it."

It did not strike Digby that Glamorgan might resent having been impeached and imprisoned! Or had all that been forgiven before Glamorgan left Dublin? The joke makes the position even more puzzling. Digby goes on, however: "It seems his Lordship thinks himself undervalued by my last propositions to him. But to return to my business. The Council with great cheerfulness undertakes to furnish me with all I desire and in the way desired. The 3,000 men are to be under Milo Power and three such captains under him as I shall approve. I beseech your Lordship to hasten me down your commission unto Milo Power to command them and to obey such orders as he shall receive from me. I shall be furnished on Sunday next with £500 out of your moneys, they undertaking to repay your Excellency within a fortnight. I received it from them as upon my own score going upon this service, without other relation to the Prince of Wales, it being too inconsiderable a sum for his name to be used in, and perhaps not fit as yet to be accepted by him from them. They have writ effectually to my Lord of Antrim concerning his frigates and my Lord of Muskerry and I shall go tomorrow to Waterford to see in what conditions and forwardness for sea they are. They will also find a ship of provisions for the men. I hope to find the frigates so provided, as I may be going by the middle of next week at furthest. Thus much for that business. I think that my Lord of Glamorgan has failed them for matter of shipping, especially of ships of war for their convoy, without which the officers and soldiers are unwilling to venture. Besides they are so daunted by the Prince of Wales his disaster and flight as they term it to Scilly, that they do in a manner mutiny against their going, as apprehending them-

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selves sent to sacrifice unless there may be more certainty for a secure landing-place for them and of a conjunction of horses on the other side, wherein as we have reason to think things stand in England, I cannot but say they have reason. I suppose they having failed on their parts they have taken the best way of excuse they could by imputing it to the crossness of the winds to the shipping which they expected; there being a proviso in the defeasance relative to that impediment whereby your Excellency will be furnished with the best pretence to those you had to deal with there for holding that business of the peace in suspense upon the same terms where it now stands till such time as you shall see the effect of my journey (to the Prince at Scilly?), which, if it succeed, will furnish you with just grounds of an avowed change of counsel in what concerns the time and manner of the supply for England. Only in the meantime, it being so vast a charge to the Council here to keep the army where now it is, unemployed, and those (English Parliamentary troops) of Bunrathy fortifying daily that place and another lower upon the river as if they expected a sudden supply out of England, I would think it very necessary that your Excellency should give them leave to employ their men in that service till such time as their shipping may come, which they may pretend to expect, reserving only 2,500 or 3,000 men to be suddenly sent for the securing of Anglesea and his Majesty's garrisons in Wales, as soon as your Excellency shall have learned in what state his Majesty's forces are there to receive them. For as soon as that can be known I think this a most necessary work, and the more necessary in case you do resolve to stay all the rest of the army upon those grounds whereof we formerly discoursed."

X

VERY MUCH AT SEA

DIGBY SO FAR had made a success of his negotiations. Everyone at the Irish headquarters was friendly and encouraging, save of course the Nuncio, and poor Glamorgan who was naturally bitterly disappointed at finding the army he had sacrificed so much to get together was now useless, as there was not a port left in England at which it could disembark.

But Digby was still in the highest spirits. The troops for England were a mere detail. If he could only find the Prince of Wales and bring him to Ireland, all parties, Irish Protestants and even Ulster Scots, would from mere feelings of decency unite to welcome the wandering heir to the throne, and all would be well.

He wrote to Ormonde on the 7th of April from the Port of Waterford.* He admitted regretfully that Antrim was more disposed to hinder than help, and that it was hard to tell whether he most hated the Lord-Lieutenant or the Irish Council. "But God be thanked, two excellent frigates are here, in which I hope to sail with men, Friday at latest." "If it please God I come to Scilly before the Prince of Wales be gone thence (which I do not much apprehend) I make no question but I shall return within few days a very welcome person to Ireland."

Digby once more urges Ormonde to send 3,000 men to secure Anglesea, whence Parliamentary forces might so easily embark to attack Dublin, and goes on :

Here at Waterford I have met with my Lord of Glamorgan, whom I find (as he hath reason) a very sad man and withal highly incensed by some about him against me. But for this latter part I believe his good nature and the reasons which I have given him have well settled him in a good measure of kindness, which the Lord of Muskerry and the rest did think very necessary to the carrying on of this business unanimously. He tells me that he hath resolved to expect nothing in his own par-

* Carte, VI. 368.

A Wildgoose Chase

ticular from hence till he hath actually brought you hither twenty ships of war, his brave train of artillery, 10,000 muskets, 800 barrels of powder and 40,000 pounds in money, which he assures we shall see done before the last of June. And in that case he makes no question but your Excellency will think him worthy to lead an army from thence. Lord increase our faith!

Some tell me that the Nuncio is offended that I would not visit him, others whisper exceptions that I would not address myself publicly to the Supreme Council, but yet I am well satisfied that this business I am going upon (fetching the Prince?) has set me very right with the latter. But whether that were or no, as long as I am persuaded that they resolve wholly to submit and be governed by your excellency they should be much in my favour who am unalterably and wholly

Yours, GEORGE DIGBY.

So Digby embarked and sailed away on what it would be high treason to call a wild goose chase, but which resembled that form of sport very closely.

He wrote from shipboard to Ormonde on the 18th of April just before setting sail.¹

"My Lord, I resolved to stay your footman till I were past all accidents to stay me, and now from the ship I return him with the account which is due from me to the Supreme Council that the delays that have been both in my despatch and in sending your Excellency the moneys agreed on, are not to be imputed to them, who in both have expressed as much warmth and reality as was possible, both businesses having failed only by my Lord Glamorgan's failing them." . . . He suggests that Berkeley's frigates should bring word to Scilly how many Parliament ships were patrolling off Dublin, where certainly it would be preferable for the Prince to land, "although it be now the more indifferent to me, in regard I have sufficient engagements from whom I desired them in case we shall land in the Irish quarters." He goes on to express how much he had been obliged by my Lord of Muskerry and Mr. Browne. "It is impossible for me to thank them sufficiently without your help. . . . I find a universal not only disposition but even passion in the Irish to be under your government, inso-much as I think it be impossible for any to hinder them from it almost upon any terms. God Almighty bless and prosper you in that great work that now lies before us, and me no longer than I am with all faithfulness your Excellency's most affectionate humble servant."

¹ Carte, VI. 371.

Very Much at Sea

The moderate Irish leaders were becoming entirely convinced that their only hope was to join with the King's party and escape from the blighting influence of the Nuncio. Lord Muskerry had only joined the Irish rebels from absolute fear of his life, and Preston was a man of the world who had fought on the Continent and could estimate the Italian envoy at his proper value.

But while the Irish were tending towards Ormonde, the settlers of English descent were beginning to feel that the whole struggle was turning into a war between Ireland and England, and to the Protestant landowners the difference between King and Parliament grew to seem less tremendous than the possibility of an Ireland ruled by the creatures of the Nuncio, and looking for help and government to Spain and Italy. They felt, as Blake once said to his sailors before a battle, "It is still our duty to fight for our country into what hands so ever the government may fall." Ormonde had long feared this possibility, and was himself disgusted at the idea of taking his old enemies as his allies, and losing all the Protestant Loyalists whom he had governed for so long. Digby's scheme of bringing the Prince of Wales to Dublin would, of course, place the Prince and his Council in authority and relieve Ormonde of the responsibility that weighed so heavily on him.

The most pressing matter at the minute was the position of Lord Byron, Governor of Chester. Chester was the chief port of communication with Dublin, and both Ormonde and the Irish leaders were alarmed at the chance of its falling into the hands of the Parliament.

Ormonde wrote to Digby on April 26th,¹ enclosing letters "which show the King's condition and resolution, the one as sad and low as rebellion can bring it, the other gallant and kingly even to admiration, God continue it. You likewise see his pleasure concerning this kingdom and know how difficult it will be for me to reconcile his several directions as by them to warrant what he would have me to do, or to bring those with whom I am to advise with to a concurrence with me. But if your Lordship succeed in your design I shall not want authority such as will satisfy though not secure me . . . but if your Lordship fail I am crestfallen."

"My Lord Byron," Ormonde goes on, "is in great distress and

¹ Carte, VI. 372.

Arrival at Jersey

hazard. Though the King seems to forbid the sending of men thither, yet if I can get them seasonably sent I will venture it, knowing how much it will secure the Prince to have North Wales in safe hands. . . . I am in treaty with the Parliament commissioners in hopes to keep them out of our quarters."

When Digby and his frigate reached Scilly, they found the Prince had left for Jersey. It was indeed extraordinary that his Council had for an instant thought of making Scilly their headquarters. The low flat islands were undefended except by their own dangerous reefs; they were uncultivated and barren, and only inhabited by a few fishermen and wreckers. Lady Fanshawe's account of the squalid misery in St. Mary's shows how life there was impossible. Jersey, fertile and thickly peopled with warlike and hardy islanders, defended by both cliffs and fortresses, was safe and pleasant and lay in the most convenient position for communicating both with England and France. There the Prince and his Council were in safety and could rest after their wanderings. The boy Prince of sixteen was lodged in Elizabeth Castle and his suite in different houses in the town.

We now have the advantage of Hyde's taking up the story, and in spite of his "hearty love of the noble person," his account of Digby's visit to Jersey is as sarcastic as it is amusing.

Digby arrived brimming over with enthusiasm, informed the Prince of the happy condition of Ireland, where peace was concluded and 12,000 men ready to cross to England, described what they all knew very well, the zeal and affection of Ormonde, and wound up by declaring if his Highness would repair thither he would find all the country devoted to him. The Prince, of course prompted by his councillors, said it was too serious a matter to decide offhand, as the Queen had ordered him to come to Paris, and he had already sent two lords there to apologise for not starting at once in obedience to her summons, and that he could not suddenly go off elsewhere without her permission or hearing from the King. Digby agreed with Hyde and the rest that going on to France was "the most pernicious council" ever given and that the King would abhor it, because any hopes in England would be ruined when people heard the Prince was in a foreign country under the orders of his Catholic mother. So finally Digby decided that he himself had better write to her Majesty and give her "solid advice." Then, as the Prince still declined to move, being

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indeed very well satisfied where he was, Digby went on with his lamentations to the sympathetic Council, and at last suggested if Hyde would concur that he would carry the Prince off into Ireland with or without his own consent ! The others in horror assured him that such a kidnapping could not be managed, but Digby never at a loss explained how easily he could invite the Prince to a collation on board and then hoist the sails and be off to Ireland. The Council were too much shocked to laugh and did not disguise their anger. Luckily Digby had no sooner "discharged himself of this imagination" than on the instant he went off on another tack, resolved to go to Paris and talk the Queen round, get money from France to pay his expenses, win "universal reputation, and be the most welcome man alive to the Lord-Lieutenant." So off he went, leaving ships, soldiers, and persons of quality from Ireland without a penny to subsist on during his absence !

In the Queen Digby always met more than his match at his own game. When he laid his plans before her, she immediately agreed to do all in her power to forward affairs in Ireland, only . . . to Ireland the Prince should not go. Naturally it seemed to her absurd to exile the heir to the throne to a remote and divided island while the great game was being really played out in the greatest capital in the world. The Prince was needed in Paris and must come to her at once.

Then Digby turned to try and gain over Cardinal Mazarin, the real ruler of France, who, says Hyde, "understood him very well," received him with the greatest ceremony and piled on flattery, explained with apparent candour that France had not been averse to see England weakened, but now in this extremity was going to take the whole business into her hands, so obviously with Paris the headquarters of negotiation the Prince positively must come and live in France. The Queen was going to send an extraordinary ambassador to the King and Parliament, and if they did not satisfy the French demands, war should be declared and an army worthy of the Prince of Wales should be ready.

Digby was busy "repaying the Cardinal all his compliments in his own coin" when Mazarin interrupted, saying he knew all about Ireland, the Marquis of Ormonde was too brave a gentleman to be deserted, and that Digby should carry a good sum of money back to Ireland, and arms and ammunitions should follow. For

indeed Mazarin was not averse to helping on the negotiations in Ireland if they might be conducted under the supervision of French agents, and end by making both Ireland and Charles dependent on the goodwill of France.

It would seem that it was in Paris that Digby learned the whole tragic story of the King's position. How he had ridden out of Oxford secretly with only two companions, and had, after many changes of plan, finally given himself up to the Scots, who "were using him barbarously."

From Paris Digby wrote to Ormonde, June 17th :¹ "I believe we may tie with one another in care and trouble for my long stay from your Excellence, but I hope in fact to be with you a few days after this with such fruits of my journey as shall make you think it well employed." He continued that, on arriving in Jersey, he had found the misfortune of having come too late, "there being such an invincible aversion in the Prince's Council against that design that nothing could have overcome but the fears they were in in Scilly, or force which I had not power to apply in Jersey." This sounds as if he would have gladly kidnapped not only the Prince but all his Council along with him, if the Jersey men had not been too strong for him.

"I found them strengthened at that time against it by arguments taken from the uncertainty how any proposition might suit with the King's new design, of which there was no more known than that he was resolved to get out of Oxford. Over and above this they armed themselves together against me with the Queen's vehement pressure and some expressions of the King's pleasure for his coming to France."

He goes on to tell that he thought it necessary to try if he could find "more reasonable people in France than in Jersey, and strengthen myself thence." He found the Queen very earnest to have the Prince in Paris as safer than Jersey, but understanding nothing about Ireland.

"By the time I came to wait upon his Eminence it was known that the King had put himself into the hands of the Scots, founding his hopes in them upon the negotiations and powers of France with Scotland, which had in a manner engaged itself to declare for the King in case he engaged himself with the Scots. I thought it not the worst season to press home with him my

¹ Carte, VI. 394.

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proposition concerning the Prince's going into Ireland" and so uniting every one under French influence.

The Cardinal instantly agreed and spoke of the necessity of making the Scots embrace no accommodation but what included the Irish, and wrote despatches to explain it to his agents with both the Scots and the Irish. But although quite admitting the advantages of the Prince going to Ireland, he suggested that it was now too late for such a move which would only irritate the Scots and that Paris was the safest and most suitable place for the Prince to wait in while these matters were arranged.

"I, finding this inclination on the one side and on the other, and the impossibility of getting the Prince from Jersey to Ireland, told his Excellency I was of his opinion, but that there was only one way to get peace in Ireland, by making certain the Prince was really going and also sending money to satisfy the Protestant soldiers. I am confident we shall have his (the Prince's) person in Ireland whenever we think it necessary, and in the meantime by pretending it necessary though it should (not) be positively so, be able to draw a constant supply of money out of France for the forbearance. . . . They do so desire to have him as that they will be willing to purchase the continuance of possession at a very good rate." In fact the money might possibly be more useful than the Prince! Also they were sure to get plenty of money from Rome on conditions which every Protestant would be ready to grant.

"One of my chiefest joys, the Queen hath been infinitely just to your Excellency, and so far from entering into any break with the Pope concerning Ireland, would never allow Sir Kenelm Digby to hearken . . . her answer still was that the business of the kingdom was already in those hands that were best able to manage it, and she would not admit the Nuncio to her presence." But then he adds what ought to have crushed his hopes—"News from the North that the Scots were likely to fail both ours and the French expectations, and make use of the King's person only to force him to what they aimed at."

In that case, where was the wonderful plan of a Scots-Irish alliance? The whole letter is an excellent example of Digby's fatal buoyancy, half a dozen plans ready, and none of them carried out!

Digby had flattered himself that the Ambassador Belèvre was

to be guided by the instructions drawn up by himself and the Queen, a memorandum which is said to bear the impress of Digby's erratic genius. Presbyterianism was to be conceded because that would set the Presbyterians and Independents by the ears; the Scots were to let Montrose join with them and acknowledge the treaty with the Irish, and the King, for the time, must give up control of the militia. Hyde, who was not told all this plainly, guessed enough to assure him that the King, not even to redeem the lives of his wife and children, would pay such a price, and there would be general horror at making concessions to the Scots, merely to create a quarrel between Scots and English.¹

The information that had now reached Paris of the King's miserable situation reminded Digby for once that no one was quite insured against disaster, and he ended his letter to Ormonde in an unusually serious tone. "If God should otherwise dispose of me, I do recommend unto your friendship my Lord Jermyn as a most entire and worthy person to whom you are already hugely obliged." . . . This letter he committed to Bennet, "the young gentleman whom I have spoken of to you before, who is returned to me out of Italy whither I had sent him, and is one whose discretion and fidelity I do infinitely trust." Bennet did justice to Digby's training and ended as Earl of Arlington.

In June the English Parliament received news which, if it had been true, would have proved Digby one of the most successful diplomatists of his time, and the saddest part is that it very nearly was true. It was said that the mediation of the French Ambassador had united the Scots to the King, that Digby had concluded an Irish peace and had an army from there to join with the Scots and was to bring the Prince of Wales to Ireland, where all would rally round his standard, and the French clergy had contributed £40,000 at the Queen's petition. The Scots denied everything, calling the whole story a damnable untruth, but they were ashamed at being detected in the intrigues they actually were carrying on, and vented their vexation in ill-usage of the captive King.²

What with promises and compliments the Cardinal had now entirely converted Digby to his own views, and Hyde tells us that "the noble person" returned to his friends undertaking "to convert all Jersey."

The Queen sent her confidential friends Jermyn and Wilmot,

¹ *Gr. C.W.*, III. 129.

² Gardiner, *Gr. C.W.*, III. 13.

Very Much at Sea

with eighty gentlemen and a large train of servants, to accompany Digby and Culpepper back to Jersey and fetch the Prince.

But in spite of compliments and his gay companions, Digby did not return in the best of spirits. After all his expectations he had only got 6,000 pistoles out of the Cardinal. But still he was convinced that the Cardinal's was the only counsel to follow : he was full of a story he had heard of an attempt that was certainly to be shortly made to kidnap and sell the Prince to the Parliament, and so was all eagerness to hurry him off to safety in Paris. He also told Hyde all about the Ambassador whom he himself had chosen and instructed to go to the Scots "vowing and believing" all Digby had told him. Digby could not take in the idea that the ruler of France would not let the web of intrigue out of his own fingers from sheer philanthropy. Hyde was obstinate. He tells us that though in truth he loved Digby very heartily, he told him again and again that his plans were impossible, and that the Prince could not leave his father's dominions without his father's permission. He tried to prick Digby's bubbles one after the other, but in vain. Unfortunately the sensible Culpepper had also been won over by the Queen, but a new ally arrived for Hyde in the person of Ashburnham, who had accompanied the King to the Scots camp, and so far from being welcomed there had been rudely bidden to shift for himself, or they would deliver him to the Parliament. He horrified the Council by his description of the King's situation, but he also asserted very strongly that it would be most pernicious to allow the Prince to go to France. Lord Capel then offered to take the risk of going himself to Newcastle to try to get into communication with the King and learn his wishes, but his offer was not accepted. The poor King's wishes were beginning to count for little weighed against the influence of the Queen and Mazarin and the private desires of the Prince who now wished to get to a more lively place of abode than Jersey.

His Highness received the letters brought by the Queen's envoys in his bedchamber, and there talked the matter over with Jermyn, and then called a Council where the letter was read aloud. A grim silence followed, broken by Hyde, who rose and moved an adjournment. Jermyn replied the Queen's commands were absolute. Hyde met his old antagonist with the sharp rejoinder that the responsibility of deciding lay with the Council and that

The Obstinate Prince of Wales

Jermyn had no right to speak, and after a little the adjournment was agreed upon.

That evening Jermyn and Digby took Hyde for a walk. How well we can imagine the fat, irascible, Chancellor posting along the cliffs in the sunset light between the two fascinating Court gentlemen who were bent on converting him. Jermyn soon had had enough of it and went home, saying Digby could easily manage the Chancellor. But well as Hyde loved Digby, he never was persuadable, and Digby's golden tongue wagged in vain. The next day was Sunday, and after service in the morning a Council was called in the afternoon. Capel still disapproving and suspicious said it was strange that no proper invitation, not even a pass, had been sent to the Prince ; and Hyde, with Hopton and the Prince's tutor, Berkshire, all agreed that the Prince ought to wait for final orders from the King, as such a sudden move to France might offend the Scots and interfere with the treaty it was hoped they were making with the King. Culpepper said he thought the King had already said all that was needful, and Digby and Jermyn "negligently insinuated" that they knew more than they cared to let out.¹ Then the Prince asserted himself and put an end to the discussion by saying that he intended to sail the next Tuesday. The Councillors, excepting Culpepper, replied that this decision of his Highness's dismissed them from his service, and therefore they would not leave Jersey. On Monday they met again and implored the Prince to delay, but after some short altercation they kissed his Highness's hands in farewell and retired.

But the end was not yet.

The wind was contrary, and in spite of the Prince's eagerness he could not start. He was so impatient that for three wretched days he would not allow any of his gentlemen to go back to their lodgings for fear of missing wind and tide, and they had to remain at the castle with no beds and only such scanty food as poor Lady Carteret could supply on the sudden. At last the Prince actually started but was driven back by the weather : daily the Council came to wait on him but "stayed very little time, there growing every day a sensible strangeness between them and the rest, inso-much that they had little speech together and the last day none ; the other lords sitting on the rock of the waterside whilst they

¹ Cl. MSS., XXVIII. 116.

Very Much at Sea

walked on the bowling green with the former, who quickly left them and they returned." *

On the evening of the Thursday Charles would wait no longer, and at five o'clock he embarked in a small shallop, resolved to row all the way to France if the wind still would not serve. The Councillors took leave of him weeping bitterly, and he was led on board by Jermyn and Digby, each firmly holding an arm ! The wind soon shifted, when Charles changed into the larger vessel and Digby into his frigate, which convoyed his Highness a little way through a storm of thunder and wind. The Prince landed safely at Containville at eleven at night.

Fanshawe remained in Jersey with Capel, Hyde, and Hopton ; Lord Berkshire went to Holland. Digby on leaving the Prince sailed for Ireland "with as much of the Cardinal's money as was left," whereof the Lord-Lieutenant never received 1,000 pistoles ! That is Hyde's agreeable way of putting it. As a fact, money or no money, Ormonde was delighted to get Digby safe back to Ireland and wrote to Hyde :

"My Lord Digby will give me leave to profess that the satisfaction I received at his coming hither suffered an abatement in that you came not with him. If it shall please you to enlarge your imprisonment by removing into this bigger island, I can promise you what retiredness you please, and what else may conduce to your contentment that is in the power of your affectionate humble servant."

Hyde, in answering this invitation, told how heartily he objected to the plan of sending the Prince to France. "It is my misfortune to differ in opinion from those with whom I have hitherto agreed, and especially with my best friend, who I hope will not render me the less fit for your charity though I may be for your consideration. Indeed there is not light enough for me to see my way, and I cannot walk in the dark, and so I have desired leave of the Prince to breathe where I stand a little for my refreshment, till I may discern some way in which I may serve his Majesty."

Of those left in England, Lady Digby and many other of the quality asked for passes to leave Oxford when the Parliament troops surrounded it, but Fairfax refused permission to anyone to

* Eva Scott from Chevalier's Journal. Hoskins, I. 428. Cl. MSS., XXVIII. 116.

Hyde Left Alone

leave ; and not till the surrender of the city in June did the General, writing from Water Eaton House, consent to give passes to the ladies. It will be remembered how brutally he had refused leave to the Queen to leave Exeter ; for "Black Tom," war was war, and he had no time for compliments.

XI

THE FALL OF MONARCHY IN IRELAND

DIGBY LANDED in Waterford in July 1646 and plunged again into the congenial atmosphere of intrigue, of hair-breadth escapes, and of wild adventure. Visiting the enemy's headquarters confident in his power to talk anyone over, holding the threads of a dozen schemes in his hand and delightfully sure that one and all were bound to succeed; flying back to France for more instructions, getting into Dublin in the teeth of the Irish and the Parliamentarians, and by sheer high spirits and persistence laying the foundations for a future understanding, although most of the men he was negotiating with would be dead before that day came.

Ormonde welcomed him back with great relief, for just as the Supreme Council had signified their readiness to come to terms a letter had arrived from the King directing Ormonde to cease negotiating! A month later when Digby arrived he relieved Ormonde's mind by handing him a letter dated the 4th of July, writing officially as Secretary of State, in the King's name, as His Majesty was unable to do so, repeating more strongly what he had already said in private, and lamenting that though the French agent on whom he had set so many hopes had secured promises from the Scots of liberty for the King's conscience, refuge for his servants, and his restoration to the throne, so far from keeping their word "they had used the King barbarously" (his own words), and kept him a close prisoner, surrounded by those who had been most active against him. The Great Seal probably would be in the hands of the enemy, so nothing was to be believed but what was written in cypher, or in letters from the Queen or Prince.

Ormonde was thus enabled to override all opposition in his Council, and told them that by the authority he possessed he had concluded a peace with the Irish; and on the 28th he wrote

to them protesting that a letter purporting to be from His Majesty repudiating any peace with the Irish, was either "surreptitious or forced," and offers himself as a hostage for the truth of his words. This protest was signed and entered in the Council books.

But Ormonde's personal feelings were still so strongly against having come to terms that he wrote to the King a sad and dignified letter refusing to take any responsibility for the peace he had now concluded on the terms His Majesty had formerly agreed on. "My Lord Digby, who hath a more perfect notion of the whole frame of your business, will more at large discourse thereon. I beseech God to protect your person and prosper your designs."

But this Peace of Forty-six was only respected by the more sober-minded men of all factions. The English Parliament paid no attention to it, and their General Inchiquin continued to burn and ravage; while the Ulster Covenanters also disowned any peace with the Catholics whom they proposed to exterminate. The Nuncio was equally determined to drive all Protestants, whether English or Scots, out of the country, and the people of the Munster towns mobbed the heralds sent to proclaim the peace. The Supreme Council therefore begged Ormonde and Digby to meet them at Kilkenny to concert some possibility of united measures.

At the end of August 1646, Ormonde and Digby went together to Kilkenny, where Ormonde on his own land and among his own Butler clan hoped that something might be done to strengthen the faltering inclination of the Irish to agree on a solid peace.

The actual negotiations were carried on by Digby as Secretary of State. But he was supported by Lord Clanricarde, a loyal and chivalrous Catholic, whose countrymen should have held him as an example. But all his loyalty, and Ormonde's traditional dignity, all Digby's fascinations, were lavished in vain on the Irish officers.

Ormonde and Digby already knew that Owen O'Neill was as fanatical as the Nuncio himself and a mere tool in the hands of the Italian, but better things had been hoped from General Preston, who had served on the Continent and must have larger views than the untravelled Irish. Lord Muskerry and Lord Castlehaven on the Irish side endeavoured to make Preston and his officers

The Fall of Monarchy in Ireland

realise that if the King's cause were lost in Ireland, nothing stood between the Irish and the Parliamentary armies that were already coming over flushed with victory and as full of religious confidence in their own cause as the Nuncio's followers were in their Catholic Crusade. But it soon became obvious that even if Preston were won over it was very unlikely that his officers would follow him, and his soldiers were in too much terror of the thunders of the Nuncio and his circle of bishops to dare to think or act for themselves.

Ormonde was received with all possible demonstrations of delight at Kilkenny, but there his success began and ended. Preston said he was unwell and could not attend on his Excellency ; Ormonde's own kinsmen refused to admit him into Cashel and Clonmell, and Owen O'Neill took advantage of the Lord-Lieutenant's absence to threaten Dublin.

Ormonde had to admit to Jermyn that now there is " little faith to be found in a place when I have so much interest of blood and alliance, and out of grief for the perfidy here " he is driven to the resolutions he hardly likes to write, but which Digby would tell by word of mouth in his next visit to France.

It was indeed bitter for the proud Marquis of Ormonde to know himself deserted by his own kin, and to see the gates of Cashel and Clonmel shut in his face. He saw the Irish were not only determined to resist the English Parliament, but to overthrow all the Anglo-Irish settlers of whatever date and set up the King of Spain's agent and the Pope's Nuncio as final authorities. The last straw was added when the Nuncio imprisoned those leaders of the Supreme Council who had invited Ormonde to Kilkenny ; and finally Preston succumbed to his authority and joined Owen Roe to block the road to Dublin.

The Lord-Lieutenant could only make his best speed back to Dublin,¹ and reached it with the loss of his baggage wagons, which were plundered by the wild tribes on the road. Digby's baggage was lost with Ormonde's, but Digby himself did not accompany the Lord-Lieutenant. He was not needed for the defence of Dublin, and whatever the risk, he was determined to remain at his Irish headquarters to baffle Glamorgan and the Nuncio as far as might be, and keep some hold on the loyal Catholic gentlemen whether they were in or out of prison.

¹ September 14, 1646.

Ormonde Treats with the Parliament

Ormonde was pursued by letters from the Irish leaders, of whom some regretted their folly too late, and some had always wished but feared to join him. He wrote impatiently to Digby of these epistles: "What use to make of them I know not, nor what is their drift in sending me things that pass betwixt themselves and their clergy. . . . My Lord there is no dealing with this people but by force."

Ormonde's long-suffering was exhausted, and as he had not force to constrain the Irish he had to turn to England, and in desperation on the 26th of September sent commissioners to England to offer to serve under the Parliament or to resign his office into their hands. But if he resigned, he insisted that he must have the King's approval, and therefore enclosed a letter which he asked them to forward to His Majesty. The more English and Puritan party in Dublin were so triumphant at these advances to the Parliament that Ormonde found it would not be safe for Digby to venture there. He wrote to warn him, almost incoherent from haste and worry,¹ but even in extremity could not forbear teasing his brilliant friend for the dilemma his cleverness had landed them in.

"I never persuaded myself with more difficulty to a frankness than at this time, to let you know that I conceive of your coming where I shall be tomorrow will not suit with the way I am in now, or (which in kindness and justice you must believe to be more in my care of you than fear of myself) with your safety, and this in kindness and justice you must believe is told you in greater care of you than myself. The strange alteration the very rumour of your going this journey hath wrought, though known only by my giving Pate your arms, is beyond belief, and to me the greatest instance of the mad undertakings of this age that I have yet observed. I have studied your case with as much or more industry than my own, and I cannot think how you have brought yourself into this fine condition or how you shall get out of it. I have freely told you my thoughts, and do expect that you should now prescribe how I may compass my ambition to show myself perfectly yours." There is no signature to this worried and cautious letter.

Although Digby was in danger from the Confederates, who ought to have been his friends, he had to run even more danger

¹ October 8, 1646, Carte, VI. 438.

The Fall of Monarchy in Ireland

from the English invaders, for on a visit to Dublin he carelessly rode too far out and was recognised by a Parliament soldier who shouted "Seize the traitor Digby!" and "had to ride for it."¹

On hearing of Ormonde's message to England, the Nuncio triumphantly made use of the paper Glamorgan had brought over appointing him Lord-Lieutenant in case of Ormonde's death or misconduct, and Glamorgan, being now the slave and tool of Rinucini, swore obedience to him in all things.

Ormonde wrote a kindly warning to Glamorgan:² "I must take the freedom of a better subject than most your Lordship meets with, and of one that wishes your happiness, to advise you to be careful how you affirm your desires to serve the King to be powers from him—and so I rest your Lordship's affectionate kinsman and humble servant."

Digby was much less gentle in the remarks about Glamorgan. "Nothing is more certain," he writes to Ormonde,³ "than that Lord Glamorgan is a principal author and fomenter of all this mischief of the clergy, and that he hath forged new powers from his Majesty to take upon him the command at least of Munster, if not of all Ireland. It is necessary that the King should be advised of it and no longer dally with the fool, but that he send him some fulminating letter, not conveyed by either of us, commanding him upon his allegiance to quit the kingdom."

Glamorgan, so far from fearing any "fulminating letter," was writing⁴ to Ormonde that he would "never be frightened at the contradiction of any others when the intimation of his Majesty's pleasure continues to me in any part."⁵

From Durdangan,⁶ Digby writes that he is waiting for a pass, for the Irish were not willing he should leave the kingdom, so "I resolved to try one expedient more and desired Daniel O'Neill to send me a pass before Sunday night, or that upon Monday I would embark for the Isle of Man." . . . "I am tomorrow morning venturing among them to Athy." Alone among open enemies and doubtful friends, Digby was shut out from any news of what was going on in the world, and begs to be told of the King and the Parliament, and the Scots, and ends beseeching that "what

¹ Whitelock.

² October 1646.

³ October 8th.

⁴ August 30th.

⁵ Carte MSS. Gardiner, (*Gt. C.W.*), III. 158.

⁶ October 10th.

Dublin Besieged by Tagg-raggs

course soever I shall find it necessary for me to run, that you will make it your care to preserve me in the good opinion of good men."

Ormonde answered from Kilcock : ¹ "I fear you will find yourself deluded by the men you now deal with. In the meantime I shall endeavour to keep you as right in the opinion of honest men as your virtue and my own affection hath placed you in mine . . . but your lordship must help me as to others by your circumspection, else I shall sooner (which I will hazard) lose my own than preserve your reputation."

In truth Ormonde was beginning to fear that Digby in his eagerness might go too far ; Glamorgan had already been carried away by his desires to secure an army at any cost. Was Digby also becoming reckless ? He was always sure he would win by sowing dissension between the leaders, and that was a dangerous game to play. Digby's next letter had to be written under feigned names ; he was in the middle of his enemies' camp ; ² but to us the disguise seems rather transparent.

DEAR SISTER,

All here on the Nuncio's party and O'Neill's is the height of insolence and villainys. Preston will not join with them, but hath sent me word if he may have but any reasonable assurance of what was offered concerning the security of religion and he will obey the Marquis of Ormonde entirely and join with all his forces against O'Neill. Besides the hatred of their generals, their men have a greater animosity one against another than those at Dublin have against either.

Ormonde answered in the same style :

KILCOCK, October 14.³

DEAR BROTHER,

. . . do wish you in better company than you find.

Digby answers that he still believes in Preston, who is ready to serve under Clanricarde, and he is convinced that Dublin is in little danger from the siege by "so many tagg-raggs."

Digby had remained among the Confederate Catholics in full confidence of his power to talk himself or scheme himself out of any difficulties, but in October he had to admit to Ormonde

¹ October 12th.

² October 14, 1646, Carte, VI. 441.

³ Carte, VI. 442.

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that he had begun to suspect he was not so free to move about as he could wish, and had pretended he was leaving Carlow only to see the French agent in Kilkenny, but he got no further on the road than Gowran, for the "Frenchman discharged me of all my baggage, which made me unapt for escape."

But as he suspected that the Irish meant to arrest him, he went back to Carlow, "where I intend to fence with them the best I can till I see some certainty of my hopes with Preston, and in the meantime press home with the French agents means for my pass, which though I should fail of, I make no question but by God's help to get safe away, especially if my Lord Byron shall obtain a pass from the Nuncio and will go to Portumna, where I will meet him. . . . I cannot blame your diffidence of Preston since I myself, who am of a much more credulous nature, cannot be confident of him." But Preston had again begged Clanricarde to come to his army, and Digby thought it would be best to accompany him, "and there together with Clanricarde and Lord Taaf give the best settlement I can. In the meantime I am far from advising the Marquis of Ormonde to any forbearance which may endanger Dublin in case Preston should fail." He had formerly advised Ormonde to weaken the Irish by burning the crops, but with the danger threatening from England of a really serious invasion he wrote: "I conjure you to forbear the destroying of the corn which I said before must tie the Marquis by the teeth to the Parliament. As for the destruction of the bridges, houses, and mills, which can be repaired again, I regard them not so much. For having strength of horse, he could easily fire the corn any time that it might be necessary."

Then Digby goes on to hint at a magnificent and characteristic scheme which at one blow would have ended all the Irish complications. Like one of Dumas's heroes, he proposed to kidnap the Nuncio! That dignitary was coming to Grange Melford, where they might "surprise him by water," and the trick would be in their hands.

Ormonde answered that he wished the deed done, and wrote to desire the commander of Carlow to assist. But the adventure never came off, and for two more miserable years the Nuncio was at liberty to tyrannise over the unhappy Irish. Clanricarde, devout Catholic as he was, wrote, "The sharp sword of excommunication hath cut my power and means away."

Ormonde's Hesitation

Ormonde¹ wrote again and again, wishing that Digby were safe away from those villains, for now matters in Dublin were coming to a crisis, and Ormonde's power to help himself or his friends was drawing to an end. The troops of the Parliament were almost at the gates of Dublin; its ships blockaded the harbour; and worst of all, Ormonde himself was beginning to feel the quarrel was becoming a national one, and that the English invaders were allies more to his taste than the Irish negotiators, for whom he took less and less pains to hide his contempt and dislike. Some hopes he shared with Digby founded on the quarrels among their opponents. "I gather there will yet be a breach betwixt the best party of the Scots and the Parliament, and both will bid fair for us! . . . I have a hard task to know in this confusion how I may best serve the King, which is, and shall be, my only study. Myself I could easily save, but that neither is nor shall be my principal care."

Digby wrote that Clanricarde was still entire in loyalty and affection, but the madness of the Irish proposals made him in despair of winning over Preston. Possibly the Catholics of Dublin also were corresponding with him, so although it seemed hardly credible that Dublin should be attacked, Ormonde would do well to be on his guard against Preston's men, Owen Roe O'Neill the Dublin men would resist.²

Ormonde wrote in manifest relief on the 10th of November, when Colonel Jack Barry brought news from Digby. "His relation of your adventures" (Why did not Colonel Barry write them for the benefit of the world?), "since they ended in so much security and likelihood of your getting safely out of this climate (which certainly contains a greater part of the primitive curse than the rest of the whole creation), were very pleasant things to me that am deeply loaden and affected by your kindnesses and extremely solicitous for your safety."

He conjures Digby not to venture more among so faithless a generation if he can possibly get away from them. Even if Preston would listen to reason, the aversion felt in England to Digby personally is so strong that no negotiations can be carried through in which his name appears, and ends, "Lose no minute that may help you towards France, whither, if I cannot serve the King here, I will soon follow you, if I can keep out of the pound." And

¹ October 22nd, Carte, VI. 446.

² November 9, 1646.

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two days later he again warns Digby that neither he nor Lord Clanricarde would be safe in Dublin, showing it was the Dublin Council that had taken such a vehement dislike to Digby. Letters had been received, he says, from the Queen and Prince, but in a cypher to which no key had been sent.

Ormonde was so weary of "the uncertain party" that he tried writing a very serious remonstrance to Taaf, protesting that after three years' endeavour for peace he found himself pursued by all the Irish armies, while Inchiquin in the South and the Scots in the North were unmolested, and he also once more appealed to the Irish gentlemen not to be mere slaves to the Nuncio.

Digby seems to have succeeded in getting his pass for France, for on the 13th of November, 1646, he writes that if Ormonde's letters had not come to delay him, he should have embarked in a small ship in a great storm, and would certainly have been cast away. It is "an intolerable penance to be thus near you and not have leave to see you," and he could manage to pay a visit in disguise, and be sure that no one would recognise him. He would certainly have delighted in visiting Ormonde under the very noses of the Dublin Council, but there is no record whether this madcap feat was ever accomplished. The letter ends by assuring Ormonde that his hopes were higher than ever, and that it was possible he might soon send Preston, as well as the Nuncio, prisoner to Dublin.

Two days later he had to admit that the Council had slighted his proposals, but after the meeting, Preston and the gentlemen of the Pale—that is, of old Anglo-Irish descent—had come to see him, resolved to adhere to Clanricarde and Ormonde. However, it was possible that if they could not get all the Irish to join, Preston alone was hardly worth the offence his alliance would give the Parliament.

If a few of Preston's men could be combed out, and some of the Scots and some of the old Royalist officers whom the Parliament had pardoned on condition of their returning to Ireland added, they might build up enough of an army to hold Dublin without the help of either the Supreme Council or the English Parliament: "If these fail, there is no way to quit opening one gate to the Parliament and another to the Irish, and all honest men going out at the third, or else joining with Preston's army to seek your subsistence in Munster or Connaught by the sword."

But after these forebodings comes a triumphant letter from Digby dated November 18th, bringing the news that Clanricarde had concluded his negotiations, and "the Nuncio and his frightened Council are dispersed over the face of the earth!" Father Oliver Darcy and the friendly officers were all safe; Ormonde was clear from any responsibility; Preston had only been playing a waiting game, and was now ready to advance on Kilkenny or Waterford; and Ormonde's horse must keep Owen O'Neill running, for with a sudden *volte face*, Preston now was "languishing" for a commission under Ormonde! But Ormonde was not to be beguiled, and curtly refused¹ to send any commission "till I have received such a submission to the peace as you mention"; for he was not going to risk losing "those of my party as have manifested a very faithful affection to the King" for "so uncertain a party as you deal with."

Digby was naturally distracted at the fruits of his long negotiations being lost by Ormonde's hesitations. He did not want Ormonde to come and treat in person.² "God forbid," he wrote, "I should persuade you, or even counsel you, trusting yourself or any of your garrison in the hands of the very best Irish . . . but why hazard all the good effects of what we have laboured in by want of a kind and civil letter to a general?" He wrote even more urgently the next day, reminding Ormonde that as he and Clanricarde had been authorised to treat, what object was to be gained by this delay, "The army begins to believe you reject them. For God's sake, give us some remedy to this, or some hint how to behave ourselves." Indeed, if Ormonde had not delayed, Owen Roe O'Neill might have been already destroyed.

Ormonde³ could only excuse his delay and coldness by explaining he was already deeply involved in negotiations with the English, who would not rely on the Irish who had so often broken their faith. He had not even had time to read this correspondence till to-day; he disliked the whole scheme, and thought the Irish would be a discredit to the King's cause. The longer the negotiations went on, the more averse Ormonde became to having anything to do with the Irish, and his worry and fatigue made him

¹ November 20th, Carte, VI. 463.

² Carte, VI. 467, November 20th.

³ November 23, 1646.

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more slow than ever. If he had clasped the skirts of happy chance, possibly he might now have united all parties. As it was, nothing could cement that alliance but the tragedy at Whitehall three years later. Then indeed all parties in Ireland were united by horror and dismay, but they would not have united so completely had it not been for the foundations of peace that Digby was risking his life and liberty to build up.

Nearly frantic at Ormonde's hesitation, he wrote¹ that he could not consider Ormonde's letter without "such heart-breaking amazement as renders me almost unable to make any reply." He admits the wisdom of caution, "but in as much as the time and manner of your expressing these objections is a strange surprise to us in point of what I expected of your kindness . . . by which variance of yours, or fatal mistake of mine, and the more fatal loss of time in rectifying error . . . not only the business we have laboured all this while so essential to his Majesty's service and all his future hopes, but the honour and personal safety of your faithfulest servant is upon the point of being made absolutely desperate." In fact, he only writes, "that I may in some measure satisfy your Excellency that I perish neither a knave nor a fool to the public, nor yet as a false friend to you." "I shall not resume so far back than merely put you in mind of our contrived separation, whereby you might obtain the better credit with the Parliament for the present assistance, and I with the Irish for the inducing a delay in their present expedition against Dublin." Ormonde himself had told Bennet that if he were in danger from the English Parliament, he should throw himself on Preston and Clanricarde, and for that reason Digby had taken the risk of staying among the Irish.

If Ormonde did not wish his name to appear in the negotiations, what could have been more private than these letters to Preston? "After giving us these grounds to engage so much further, he had forborne to move till there was no time left for deliberation."² "I must conclude that all is a destiny to sacrifice me to ruin and infamy (for the certain loss of liberty or life I value not), wherein there will remain only the consolation to me the Indians have in being eaten by their own survivors, that, as they have the comfort of being buried in their best friends, I have that of being destroyed for and by the person in the world

¹ November 24, Carte, VI. 471.

² Carte, VI. 471.

I love best." Clanricarde wrote at the same time a very quiet and dignified remonstrance against being thrown over by Ormonde at the last moment, which Ormonde answered by saying he does not remember what is alluded to, and that he has no time to write more, "better if they could meet and talk it over"—evidently the letter of a man worn out and confused by the burdens thrown upon him, painstakingly anxious to do his duty, but quite unequal to such a herculean task.

He answered Digby at last by sending the military commissions desired, as he now understood that granting them did not prove his approbation of all that was being done. He detested the whole business so heartily that he even grumbled that he did not know what title to give Preston. Digby answered in immense relief¹ that Ormonde's letter had arrived "just in time to save me from expiring my last breaths of hope," and entreats Ormonde to arrange to meet him the following day. At that meeting it is clear that Digby managed the Lord-Lieutenant admirably. Ormonde was allowed to disclaim all responsibility as often and as strongly as he liked, but he wrote the letters that Digby wanted, telling Preston² that Digby and Clanricarde would lay before him the conditions concerning troops and garrisons, and assuring Clanricarde of his readiness to obey any orders from the King his master, or what Lord Digby as principal Secretary of State should signify to be the King's pleasure.

But when Ormonde was keeping Christmas at Castletown, he wrote as dispiritedly as ever, asking what was to be decided about surrendering churches and livings to the Irish. Digby was now in Dublin in spite of the Council, and wrote encouraging Ormonde to hang on till he got back from France, where he had hopes of doing great things. Let the Roman Catholics cozen themselves with hopes for more than they would ever get, so long as no one was responsible for their mistakes! The very words that the King had used long before to Rupert! Is it any wonder that the Irish hesitated, and that Ormonde refused to be involved by this super-cleverness?

Digby explained he could not get to France very easily from Dublin, as the harbour was blockaded by the Parliament ships. But as the frigate he hoped to sail in had been bought by the French agent, if Ormonde would tell the Parliamentary commander it

¹ November 25th, Carte, VI. 480.

² November 26th.

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was sailing on the French King's business, he might let them pass. A postscript says the Parliament men had said the ship might pass if they might first search it, and then took the opportunity to rifle it !

It appears that Digby did not manage to get away, for in January 1647 Ormonde invites Clanricarde to bring Digby to meet him at Trim, and adds : " He is glad to hear the people here are made to understand that perfidy is not countenanced in France." " For Glamorgan and Antrim the matter were not great what becomes of them, if there were not a national propension in this people to love their cozeners."

Digby had given up hopes of sailing from Dublin, and went back South, where he wrote from Ross on February 27th that he and the French Envoy, M. de Moulin, were together, and that there were hopes of 5,000 French troops being sent from Rochelle ; and he winds up by telling that he is entrusting Ormonde with " my precious black and dun horse," which now " I desire your Excellency to keep for me till we meet."

But a week later he is still weatherbound. He writes from Passage on Cork Harbour on the 6th of March that " after three days and three nights' contestation with rough seas, contrary winds, and leaking ships, we got back safely hither last night."

In spite of the commissions that had been signed, and the civilities of Preston, the Lord-Lieutenant's task was like trying to grasp sand : as one grain was held fast, another slid through his fingers. At one minute Preston was all that could be desired ; the next day Ormonde was to send him a severe reproof for a proclamation he had issued, which Ormonde could only think was a forgery ; it was so unbecoming a man of honour which Ormonde had believed him to be. Then Lord Clanricarde tried to mediate, and even Owen Roe began to see the danger of driving the Lord-Lieutenant to extremity and sent his nephew Daniel to the Nuncio and Supreme Council, who responded by clapping Daniel into prison. Then Lord Inchiquin hearing of Ormonde's negotiations with the Parliament, and realising that he was holding Dublin for England independent of parties, sent him a few reinforcements, and the distractions among the Confederate Catholics culminated in Owen Roe's announcement that he owed obedience to no one, not even the Nuncio ! Preston had to admit that he was helpless while Inchiquin's men only staved off the final

The Queen's Secretary

catastrophe of Dublin for a short time. Then Ormonde had to break to the King that the perfidy of the Irish had forced him to make terms with the Parliament,¹ and to decide to retire to France. He was anxious to see Digby on his own account, to talk over his own future movements. If he remained on in Ireland he might be of use, yet to remain in the false position with another exercising the authority that had been his right reflected on the King his master. Digby warned him that his position in France would very much depend on how many men he would be able to bring with him from Ireland to make up an Irish regiment. If England raised difficulties, Ormonde must temporise till Digby could send ships and carry off the men in spite of them, and why leave the train of artillery to be used by villains? On the 16th, Digby was still in Ireland, now near Waterford; he has two French agents and five large ships at Passage ready to carry off any soldiers who wanted to seek their fortunes abroad. Ormonde replied that he had given hostages to the Parliament, and he should forfeit them if he sent troops abroad without leave. Ormonde was asked by the Parliament to continue to keep order in Dublin till their Commissioners could arrive. He was anxious that the Queen should understand he had not taken these steps till no others were possible, and he had a chance of explaining this clearly to the Queen's private secretary who just at this time came over to make a last attempt to reconcile the Lord-Lieutenant with the Catholics. He came incognito, calling himself Winter Grant. Digby sent his secretary, Slingsby, on the 12th of May, 1647, to announce that the despatches Grant had brought made it necessary for him at once "to wait upon your Excellency," and begs the precious dun gelding might be sent for him to travel on, and a convoy for safety.

Ormonde had to reply that all his horses were out, but "I have advised with the learned in such cases, and it is resolved the way Mr. Slingsby will tell you is the safest and most convenient for your coming. I want faith coming from Kilkenny."

Of course the Lord-Lieutenant could not refuse to hear the Queen's messenger, and he wrote to Winter Grant: "I have been persuaded by my Lord Digby (yet not without more of dispute than hath ever arisen betwixt us) to return these answers to

¹ March 1647.

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the first and latest overtures from Kilkenny. It is their treachery and disloyal affections force me to the application to the Parliament and out of the Kingdom, if I do go."

Digby still would not relinquish his hopes of negotiations or playing with the Irish, but offered, if any complications in the English negotiations had arisen through his correspondence with the Irish, to give himself up to the Parliament as a prisoner and victim ! Matters, however, did not come to this tragic extremity, as Ormonde quietly told the Irish if Lord Digby were not given a pass, he should not go on treating. Digby was distressed that Ormonde should have put himself to such trouble to secure his pass, but reminded him it must be as full as possible : "Your Excellency knows that Captain Wood, whom I take to be an honest man in his way, told me to my face that if I had all the passes that could be given me, if he should meet me at sea, unless I had an ordinance of Parliament for my security, he would not forbear to carry to London so notorious an enemy of the Parliament." There had been some good-natured suggestions that Digby had advised Ormonde to make terms with the Parliament, but Digby protested : "The Parliament owes me no thanks for my election to have you fall rather into their hands, since you know that God allowed David a choice even of his greatest plagues." "But one way wherein I will never accept, much less seek their favour, that is if I might be so happy though with the loss of my life to be an instrument of accommodation between the King my master and them."

And so in that summer of 1647, one after another of the King's friends left Ireland. Clanricarde had a pass in June 1647. Digby gave Ormonde paternal advice, that when he left he must "avoid being huddled away" by providing all things suitable for his departure. "It is not fit for you to go into England till you have first been to France" to get the orders of the Queen and Prince ; "but from the judgment which I make of things in England, I cannot imagine it possible but within the time prefixed, though it were shorter, you will be obliged to resume the Government," for he was convinced that an accommodation was imminent between the King and Parliament. Digby's prophecy was unfortunate, for at the moment when he was writing, the King had just been taken from the hands of the Parliament and was at the headquarters of the army. But it was true the hopes of the

Ormonde Leaves Ireland

Royal party were brighter, for Cromwell and Ireton were both eager for an agreement between the King and the army.

Now that it was too late, Preston and his officers were in "incredible consternation," and full of offers of service. They begged for a meeting with Ormonde in an arbour at the Salmon Leap at Leixlip, and there they declared plainly that nothing but destruction lay before them.¹ To which Ormonde replied with some contempt that he could not see why his leaving the country should lay men of courage with a yet prosperous army open to destruction, or why he should hope for more from them now than previously, it was only to please Digby that he had "so unhand-somely huddled up his sword." So he persisted in leaving the country. He refused to go first to France, for he must see the King before anything, and after that he could hear the Queen's wishes. The only thing clear to Ormonde's honest soul was that he was the King's servant and it was detestable to him to receive orders from anyone else. Ormonde left with a safe conduct for England,² where he was treated with great respect and consideration, and permitted several interviews with the King at Hampton Court. He then joined Lady Ormonde at Caen.

Glamorgan's estates were forfeited and presented to Lord General Cromwell, and one by one the beggared servants of the King drifted to France or the Netherlands, there to eat the "salt bread of exile" for twelve long years. Only Digby remained in Ireland, still indefatigably twisting ropes of sand. Muskerry and Taaf, in command of the Munster army, were anxious to support him, and Preston marched on Dublin; but the new Governor of Dublin, Jones, defeated him utterly at Dangan Hill,³ when Digby commented that he himself was much more troubled at the disaster than was the Supreme Council.

Inchiquin, still temporarily devoted to the Parliament, continued to fight on in Munster, and in November, with the aid of fresh Parliamentary drafts from England, won the victory of Knockiness, where, with the usual luck of the Royal servants, two letters of Lord Digby's to the Irish leaders were found in Lord Taaf's cabinet on the battlefield, and promptly printed by the Parliament. Luckily, by this time, Digby was safe across the sea, and never saw Ireland again.

¹ July 23, 1647. See Carte, VI. 530.

² July, 1647.

³ *Ibid.*

XII

THE EXILES

WHEN ORMONDE gave up Dublin to the Parliament and sailed for England, Digby wrote to him farewell with the saddest heart that ever man had. "God prosper you and make good rather all your fears for me, than the least part of my apprehensions for you."

For Digby was still in Ireland, trying to get leave from all parties to transport Irish soldiers to the Continent, and incidentally in danger of his life from all parties, and further any civility he received from one side was sure to undo his chances of negotiating with the other. But no one knew better than Digby how to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds, and so he at last succeeded in escaping from the country that Ormonde had vowed "contained a greater part of the primitive curse than the whole rest of the creation," and reported his adventures in a letter to Ormonde written September 1647.

In the extraordinary confusion of parties in Ireland no man was able to answer for anyone but himself. Jones the Parliamentary General was "most honourable," and ready to permit Digby to remain at Leixlip in as complete safety as when Ormonde was commanding there. But Jones's civility did not prevent the sailors of the English fleet from swearing, safe conduct or no safe conduct, if they once got Digby in their hands they would either carry him to the English Parliament or throw him overboard.

Preston, the leader of the Catholics, on his side offered a pass to carry Digby to the coast couched in such friendly terms that Digby was afraid it would compromise him with the Royalists, but the Supreme Council with supreme indifference to Preston's honour ordered their army to attack and storm Leixlip. Fortunately there were English forces both of the King and Parliament in the neighbourhood, and as the Irish were of several

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ANNE DIGBY, COUNTESS OF BRISTOL.
Vandyke. In possession of Margaret Lady Verney.

To face p. 148.

Abstract

Lady Digby does Business

factions a free fight ensued, during which Digby openly confessed he ran away "amusing any fools" who were likely to stop him with unlimited promises of the influence he would use for them in France, and so he escaped to some refuge where he was able to disguise himself, and reached the shore and embarked in a little open boat of eight ton. The captain was a Protestant, but Digby could not avoid letting him know who was his passenger, and he proved to be a man of honour who carried the fugitive safely to France. Digby ends with a sketch of the chaos in which he had left Ireland, and how the more moderate men whether of English or of Irish descent would rather submit to the English Parliament "than to O'Neill or any foreign power."

Digby's eldest son John had been in Jersey under Hyde's care while his father was in Ireland, and Hyde wrote in November 1647: "Well, your John and I cherish one another and are both cherished lovingly by the good friendship you left us with."

But Digby did not go to Jersey but went straight to Caen, no very pleasant voyage in an open boat, and there he found Lord Bristol and many other English exiles, and there Hyde relates he spent his time agreeably in a number of quarrels about what had happened in England "which he was always ready to answer sword in hand." Naturally one of the first of these duels was with Lord Wilmot, who was wounded before one of Sir Kenelm Digby's sons could interfere and part the combatants.¹

When Ormonde left Ireland Digby had begged him in passing through England to see Lady Digby. "I recommend unto you the care of my distressed wife and children, and that if you pass over into France you will take them along with you, when if God bless me, I intend to be suddenly."

But Lady Digby thought it wisest to remain in England, like Lady Ormonde and many other Royalist wives who stayed to gather up the relics of their fortunes and provide some hope for the future of their families.

Lady Digby fared better than many, as her own family belonged to the winning side. The Sherborne estates were let to her sister, the widow of Lord Brook of Lichfield fame, for £530, and, no doubt by a family arrangement, Digby was allowed to compound for their possession for £500. In April 1647, "At the request of Lady Anne Digby and in consideration for

¹ Cl. S.P., 2626, October 17th.

her children," Government ordered that a hundred marks a year should be paid to her out of Lord Digby's rents. In 1645 his property in land had been worth £4,000 a year, but later Gillingham forest was sequestered, and a Dorset property, Candlewake Court, was handed over to a creditor in payment of a debt of £1,100. ¹

Lord Digby was more fortunate than his half-brother Sir Lewis Dyves. When Fairfax took Sherborne he gave quarter to Dyves, who was carried to London a prisoner, and brought to the bar of the House of Commons, where he refused to kneel till he was forced to his knees. He was committed to the Tower under a charge of high treason. His poor wife who was expecting her confinement declared she should die if she were not allowed to see her husband. But the Puritan rulers had no leisure to attend to women's fancies. Dyves remained in the Tower and Lady Dyves and her baby both died. Dyves, too late to save them, escaped from prison in a woman's dress. He had to take a flying leap over a broad canal under the eyes of a sentry, who, however, only laughed and swore "this is a chancy jade." So Dyves got off and lived to tell his adventures to Mr. Pepys, who saw him, old and poor, looking on at the gambling in the Temple Hall which he could not afford to join.

Hyde, who had been watching anxiously for Digby's escape and hardly thought it possible he should get out of England,² now did his best to keep his friend out of further mischief, wrote urging him to "borrow or beg (it is very honest) so much as will keep you alive and cleanly for one year, and withdraw into a quiet corner where you are not known and where not above two or three friends may hear of you. If you can but live for one year without being spoken of at all, you shall find a strange resurrection of your fortunes." Did Hyde really imagine this brilliant friend could under any circumstances bury himself in seclusion even in hope of a "strange resurrection"! And that he should dream that Digby would be content to live for one whole year without being spoken of, shows that with all his affection he did not know Digby very well. He goes on in his best pulpit style, suggesting that Digby should meditate on his life, "consider what frowardness of fortune it comes to pass that a man of the most exquisite parts of nature and art that this age hath brought forth, hath been without success in those very actions for which meaner

¹ *Civil War in Dorset*, 399.

² Cl. S.P., 2470.

The Council Ordered to the Hague

men have been highly commended. That a man of the most candid and obliging disposition, of the most unrevengful, have fewer friends . . . but more enemies among those whose advancement and prosperity he hath contributed to, than ever man hath met with." And then, as a writer is always convinced that writing is a panacea for all evils, Hyde suggests that Digby should help him with the *History of the Rebellion* on which he had already started. This idea was too delightful to give up, and Hyde wrote again urging that Digby's two secretaries might write from his dictation and supply Hyde with plenty of copy for his history. He is a little uneasy as to what Digby may be busy about, but trusts "you will let no suffering lessen the innocence for which you suffer," and ends, "I know it is not in your power not to love me," and so begs to be told if there is any way in which he can gain the Queen's favour, as without that he could be of no use to the Prince of Wales or to the King's cause.¹

But an opportunity arrived that offered Digby something a good deal more lively than writing memoirs, even of his own doings. Young James of York had escaped from England disguised as a girl, "and a very pretty girl, too," it was reported, in spite of a thick waist which puzzled the tailor who made the disguising dress.

The boy took refuge with his sister, the Princess of Orange, and to them at the Hague a number of the English seamen carried over their ships, and falling on their knees protested their loyalty and begged the young Duke to be their Admiral. When the Prince of Wales heard this he was both jealous and indignant, and started at once for Holland to put his young brother into his proper place, commanding Ormonde and Bristol to meet at Rouen and follow him.

Digby wrote on the 23rd of June to Hyde, conjuring him to hasten to Rouen, "you will have received a kind and earnest invitation from Lord Jermyn," who had given orders to Sir George Carteret, the Governor of Jersey, to furnish Hyde with all he might need for the journey, so forestalling poor Hyde's excuse that he had no riding-boots and so could not possibly travel.

When the Councillors reached Rouen, however, they found the Prince had already gone on to Holland, and the usual jealousies

¹ Cl. S.P., II, 330.

The Exiles

and intrigues prevented the greater part of the Council from following him except poor faithful Hyde, who, half dead with seasickness and robbed by pirates, at last arrived at the Hague, where no one particularly wanted him.

The rest of the Council went comfortably back to Caen, where Digby proceeded with his affairs of honour. Having concluded this business, Digby decided to remove to Paris ; in spite of duels, Caen was too quiet a place to hold him long.

The Paris in which Digby decided to seek his fortune was the Paris of the three Musketeers, a Paris seething with revolt and intrigue, ruled by a rather foolish Queen-mother, a boy-King, and, most powerful of all, the Italian Cardinal Mazarin. No adventure was too hairbrained, no ambition too wild to be entertained there, and among all these romantic figures Digby really out-Dumased Dumas.

We may even amuse ourselves by figuring him and his friends as replicas of the Musketeers, for Ormonde in his dignity and resourcefulness was a very Athos and Digby was if anything a wilder d'Artagnan. Only the poor, fat, shrewd, testy Chancellor was a man by himself, and would not double the part of Aramis, although there were points of resemblance even there.

When Hyde in his old age tells the story of Digby's adventures there is an acid sub-flavour that makes everything a little contemptible or a little ridiculous ; luckily there are other versions of some of the episodes which show they were looked on in France with very different eyes than those of good Mr. Chancellor.

But at the very beginning of his career in Paris Digby received a severe rebuff. The Cardinal, who had overwhelmed him with compliments when he visited Paris as the Secretary of State of the King of England and representative of the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, now "received him not," says Hyde, "with the esteem he had formerly done, but only as a man who proposed to himself to live upon his bounty."

Mazarin, in fact, had no use for Digby just then. The ruling party in England was too strong to be disturbed, and any French intrigue would only react on France herself.

The game of the Cardinal with the Royalists was to play the part of an unwilling host to uninvited guests. He could not advise the French Queen-mother to deny shelter to her sister-in-law Henrietta Maria, daughter of Henri-Quatre, but he wished

England to see that neither Henrietta Maria nor her following were in the least welcome.

So Mazarin only "gave Digby very good words, promised him some command in the army, he proposing to himself no other course of life for his subsistence and deferment than the war, and in the meantime gave him a very mean supply for his present subsistence, nor did he find any better reception from those with whom he expected to be admitted as a full sharer of all they enjoyed." "This mortification," says Hyde, "would have broken any other man's heart, but it only gave Digby some fits of indignation."¹ King or Cardinal might fail him, but he trusted in his star

He managed somehow to procure himself a horse, and then entered the French King's army as a volunteer. "A personage of the other side," relates Hyde, "coming out single out of the troops to 'change a pistol,' as the phrase is, with any single man that should be willing to encounter him, without speaking to anyone he moved his horse very leisurely towards him, the other seeming to stand still to expect him, but he did in truth dexterously retire so near his own troops that before the time he could come to charge him, the whole front of that squadron discharged their carbines on him, while the other retired into his place. By this dishonourable proceeding he received a shot in his thigh with a brace of bullets, and keeping still his horse needed no excuse for making what haste he could back when he could no longer sit his horse. This action being performed so gallantly in the view of the King, the Cardinal and the Prince of Condé, all men inquired who the gentleman was, and very few knew more than that he was an Englishman, but his name was quickly known and the King thought himself concerned that he should want nothing; and from this action he made another glorious flight into the world. He was no sooner recovered of his wounds and went to make acknowledgment to the King and the Cardinal, but he found the Cardinal's countenance very serene towards him, and himself quickly possessed of an honourable command of Horse, with such liberal appointments as made his condition very easy, the Cardinal taking all occasions to do him honour, and he very well knowing how he was the discourse of the whole Court and had drawn the eyes of all men upon him. His quality, his education,

¹ Cl. S.P., III.

The Exiles

the handsomeness of his person and even the beauty of his countenance (being not at that time above thirty years of age and looking much younger), his softness and civility in all kinds of conversation, his profound knowledge in all kinds of learning and in all languages in which he enlarged or restrained himself as he saw occasion, and made him grateful to all kinds of persons."

His first troop of horse after the custom of the time was raised by his own exertions, and consisted of exiled English, to whom he held out all sorts of astonishing hopes, so that they crowded to him congratulating themselves on such a chance. They celebrated him in all places, and he praised them as heroes who might have had any position and who gave up all to be under his command, and he only urged patience till they should rise with him.

"But patience and industry were virtues that neither of them were very well acquainted with," and as they expected a good deal more than promises, "while he had not the least inclination to bounty or generosity," he and his heroes grew mutually tired of each other, and he thought himself very lucky when he was rid of them. He gave his first cornet his own crest, an ostrich as ensign and in its mouth a piece of iron with under it the words, *Ferro vivendum est libi quid praestantia pluma*, "as the ostrich lives on iron without any advantage from the beauty of its plumage, so he expected none from the lustre of his pen in which he believed he excelled all men, this invention added even more to his reputation." Also, "there was so much treachery and falsehood among the Court that the Cardinal and Queen admitted him soon into their utmost confidence, and he was in truth ready for the boldest undertaking in which he sometimes had success which he never forgot, but he never remembered a want of it."

When Paris was horrified by the news of the execution of King Charles the First, the young King Charles reluctantly obeyed his mother's summons to join her there. She, poor thing, imagined the second Charles would be as affectionate and docile as the first, and had a rude awakening. Her son quickly showed that he proposed to be his own master and to choose his own friends. A shrewder man than his father, he saw very clearly that any sign of his mother's influence would be disastrous to his English chances, but unfortunately he seldom used his very good wits in

1 Cl. S.P., III.

The King Dismisses his Council

his choice of his companions, but drifted into intimacies with men who were only fit to amuse him.

The favourite at this time was Thomas Elliott, one of his grooms of the bedchamber. The dead King had absolutely forbidden Elliott to be with his son, but now Charles could please himself, and Tom Elliott became his inseparable companion and mentor, while as Rupert approved of the friendship, the Queen found herself practically ignored. She had been very reasonably anxious that the advisers whom her husband had trusted should be about her son, that Hatton and Nicholas should be still of his Privy Council, and Digby continue to be Secretary of State, as indeed was the usual course of procedure.

Digby wrote one of his most charming letters, offering his inviolable devotion to the young King with the same duty and service that he had given to his father. Real feeling rings through the elegant and polished sentences, but they had no effect on Charles, who answered vaguely that there were few men from whom he promised himself such good service, and when he was restored to "a condition I can delight in, I do promise you a place as near my person and near my trust as yourself can desire."¹ The civility of this letter must have been an effort, for Hyde tells us Charles had taken the greatest dislike to Digby, and Elliott never lost an opportunity of fanning it.

Hyde feared that such a rebuff would drive Digby to madness, and was immensely relieved when once his friend had "breathed out his grief" that he discovered that he was lucky in not having to waste his days in attendance on a King without a kingdom instead of getting on in the world.

The other members of the Council did not take their dismissal so cheerfully. Lord Bristol wrote very sadly to "good Mr. Chancellor," "to take farewell, as he found himself laid aside in point of affairs, and secluded from the council." But he had already told Hyde (May 1649) that he must be much satisfied of their new master's affection to withdraw him from "his strong inclination to a retirement from the affairs of this unvirtuous and unreasonable world," so doubtless the rebuff of the King did not greatly surprise, though it might mortify, the old statesman. All his comrades had to follow him into more or less honourable retirement. Hyde and Cottington were sent out of the way on

¹ Cl. S.P., III, fol. 71-2.

a trumped-up mission to Madrid, and the young King was reported to be living very quietly at St. Germans, visited by no peer but Lord Jermyn. His companions were Elliott and Lucy Walters, his lovely Welsh mistress, mother of the ill-fated Monmouth. Elliott's father-in-law was on the point of completing the happy party in the position of Secretary of State, but Cottington succeeded in stopping that by a most biting jest. Digby's good fortune in not being tied to Charles became more and more obvious as the French Court treated the young King with increasing coldness, till finally he was obliged to find a home for the winter in loyal little Jersey; while within two or three years of Digby's entering the French service, by his success in the war with Spain and "his own address and dexterity, he made himself such a favourite that the King made him a knight of the highest honour he could bestow."

Although Paris was at this time in rebellion against the King, Henrietta Maria was still permitted to live in the palace of the Louvre. When Charles was staying there with her, Digby made a scheme to bring in a number of officers to present to his King, proposing with their help to make himself master of the palace and turn it into a fortress for the French King's troops. When an accident prevented this plan from being carried out, he never thought of apologising to Charles for intending to use him as a stalking horse, but only explained that although it would have been impossible to involve His Majesty in the responsibility by confiding in him, that the service of the King of France and his (Digby's) own glory had obliged him to undertake it.

Hyde was distressed at Digby's taking service under any King but his own, and urged "many things which other men of your quality many justly and honourably do will be crimes in you. You can no more be servant to another crown than you can marry another wife." From what Hyde tells of Digby's flirtations this argument may not have been very convincing, but it is hardly surprising that a brilliant and ambitious man should prefer to earn his living by his sword than to starve on charity with no thanks from his King for his sufferings. As an officer in the French service, Hyde admits, Digby was now in a position of independence and dignity.

The place in which he was now stationed gave him complete command of the Seine, and no trade could go up or down it but

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Digby's Gallantries

by his permission,¹ so most people thought he would make an immense fortune by granting passes, for he lived very economically, never exercised any bounty and as little charity, yet he was always without money and even without clothes and linen. He gamed a great deal and not well, and also had amours in which his vanity involved him. He would admire and extol the person he adored beyond what any of the poets had used to do—and bewail his “unworthiness, even in tears at his mistress’s feet, making all the promises and vows imaginable, and would procure letters of his wife’s desperate sickness of some disease that could not be cured—and thereupon make promises and offers of marriage,” and so would “act as romantic exploits as are recited in any of the romances.” He was “votary” to a certain lady of real beauty, the Duchess de Chatillon, to whom an Abbé was also “servant,” who had “used some expressions that displeased the lady, who complained of him to various persons of quality,” including Digby, who was at this time Governor of Nantes and of L’Isle d’Adam. A French version of the incident² explains that the Abbé Cambiac had jealously remonstrated with the lady about her flirtations, although he really feared none of his rivals but the Prince of Condé. Digby was ruining himself to please this mistress, so when she made a thousand complaints to him of the Abbé’s rudeness, he was delighted with the chance of taking vengeance on a rival. He sent five or six horse soldiers to arrest the Abbé on a journey and sent him back to the lady with a message that if he did not make her complete satisfaction he would do justice on him. Bussy Rabutin insinuates that the Duchess would not have troubled if Digby had killed the Abbé, but it was extremely inconvenient to have him kidnapped and offended. Hyde says the lady was “infinitely surprised and scandalised and requested that Digby should meddle no further in her affairs.” In fact, she spoke so strongly that Digby was a good deal hurt, and then as she was not willing to lose so wealthy and generous a lover, she was obliged to moderate her indignation. As for the Abbé she knew so well that it was dangerous to have made him an enemy that she overwhelmed him with apologies and offers of hospitality, offering if he would not remain in her house to send him home in her own coach. But the Abbé was too deeply offended to be softened by fair words and “left hurriedly.” He

¹ Cl. S.P., III.

² *Amours des Gaules*, I. 167.

The Exiles

said afterwards that Digby had behaved in a most gentlemanly manner and had given him a dinner before despatching him to the Duchess. He kept all his indignation for the lady, to whom he indeed did prove a dangerous enemy, although Hyde said the matter ended in general laughter.

As well as Condé, Digby and Cambiac, the Duchess numbered Lord Crofts among her admirers. When Digby and Crofts both found they could not prevail with her, they consulted how to do most honour to the object of their affection, and decided to make her Queen of England. The King really seems to have been a good deal smitten by her, but Bussy Rabutin piously explains that God, who had charge of Charles's reputation, gave her the crazy hope of securing Condé, which made her miss this fine chance. Also her friends told her she was a visionary to want to marry a mere shadow of a King who had not enough to keep himself, and who by the time he was restored to his throne would be weary of her and make inequality an excuse for divorcing her. It also soon became plain that she would not be received by either the Queen of France or Henrietta Maria, so she decided to refuse her distinguished suitor. Hyde spoke enthusiastically of her beauty and charm, and seems to have had a higher opinion of her than appears in the writings of her countrymen and countrywomen—in fact, it may be suggested that the Chancellor had not escaped quite scatheless from the Duchess's fascinations.¹

The failure of this romance had no effect upon Digby, who Hyde assures us continued for forty years after to pour out protestations and tears whenever he found an object he considered worthy of them !

Digby was not able to leave the army to bid Hyde and Cottington farewell when they started for Spain. He wrote in August 1649, regretting that he could not see them, and four days later a farewell letter to Hyde explaining he could not show himself at St Germans, after having already taken leave of the King and Queen and being "secluded from the Council."²

The King diplomatically told Ormonde he was pleased to hear Digby had attained to so good a condition in the service he was in, and in 1652 commanded Ormonde to go and interview him. Ormonde suggested taking Hyde with him "to assist his

¹ *King in Exile*, Scott, p. 342.

² Cl. S.P., III. 410.

Digby in Favour in Paris

own bad memory," so it is evident Digby was being honoured with some important communication.

Dan O'Neill wrote to Ormonde that Digby was infinitely pleased, but could not move till the Duc de Nemours was beaten or forced to retreat, "for the court and army expect more from his discretion than (from) their strength or the Duke's conduct, both of which, if I am not misinformed, are very inconsiderable." Digby's own ambition now was to be given the Garter. He wrote to Ormonde that he was not surprised that Queen Henrietta Maria had done little on his side as when the Queen of France wished for her assistance in getting Orleans to make him Lieutenant-General, she flew into a passion and was not easily persuaded, and he went on to lament "the heavy misfortune I live under in the reproach of his Majesty's disfavour and aversion."¹

But it is clear that Charles's dislike of Digby was abating. Unless his companions kept his objections alive, it was not in Charles's indolent nature to turn his back on such an amusing and useful companion, and Hyde tells us "within two or three years Digby recovered so much credit with the person of the King by his own pure address and dexterity that he not only made himself acceptable to him in conversation, but so gracious that he made him Knight of the Order of the Garter."

The troubles of the Fronde at last obliged Mazarin to retire to Italy. Digby remained in Paris so high in the Queen's confidence, that as she was very ready to trust him, he began to consider whether he might not succeed the Cardinal as Prime Minister of France! He began by warning the Queen of the danger of ever letting Mazarin return. She answered him very civilly, but let the Cardinal know, and Digby was soon despatched away in command of troops to Italy "on an enterprise that was not intended for success," and on his return with many compliments he was cashiered and requested to leave France and not return.

Hyde tells us he left behind him the reputation of a very extraordinary person, wonderfully qualified for speculation, but somewhat defective in reducing those speculations into practice. *Magnis tamen excidit ansis.* Old Lord Bristol remained behind and ended his days in Paris. It is very possible that the careful

¹ Ormonde MSS., I, New Series, fol. 25.

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living for which Hyde blamed Digby had something to do with the support of the old lord, but such a possibility Hyde is careful to ignore.

Bristol solaced the loneliness of his exile with writing verses. He had always been something of an author, though his longer writings were never printed. His last sad little verses¹ were set to music by Henry Lawes in his *Ayres and Dialogues*.

Grieve not, dear love, although we often part,
But know that nature gently doth us sever
Thereby to train us up with tender art
To brook the day when we must part for ever.

For nature doubting we should be surprised
By that sad day whose dread doth chiefly fear us
Doth keep us dayly schooled and exercised
Lest that the fright thereof should overbear us.²

These lines were published a year after Lord Bristol's death in January 1653. The jealousy felt against any Protestant burials in Catholic countries had made the Ambassador, Sir Richard Browne, buy a plot of ground, formerly a cabbage garden, for an English cemetery, and there Lord Bristol was laid. The spiteful *Mercurius Politicus* reported that Digby did not attend the funeral to save expense, but as he had been turned out of France with scant ceremony, he was hardly likely to risk liberty, if not life, by returning for a ceremony which could give no pleasure to his father.

¹ A. Wood, *Ath.*, III. 339.

XIII

WITH AN ARMY IN FLANDERS

AS IN 1656 DIGBY had to make a fresh start in life, he decided to follow the young King to Flanders.

When Charles returned to France after the failure of his hopes in Scotland and his defeat at Worcester, his life in Paris as a dependant on his mother's relations was not a happy one, and his followers were reduced to such straits that Hyde wrote : " I do not know that any man yet is dead for want of bread which I really wonder at," and continues that he can " hardly hold his pen for cold and had not three sous to buy a faggot."

But wretched as was their refuge in Paris, they were soon to be denied even the right to starve there. Cromwell decided to take the French into alliance, and at his word the grandson of Henri IV was turned out of France. His mother was permitted to remain, and the position of young James of York in the French army was winked at on the understanding that he should be sent to serve on the Italian frontier.

For a while the exiled King lived quietly and respectably at Aix and Cologne, and then he was offered a refuge in Flanders by the Spaniards, who hoped through him to win over the Irish and English Royalists who had enlisted in the French army.

The war between France and Spain was dragging on sluggishly and interminably, and Digby, who was now Earl of Bristol, was quite as ready to fight on the Spanish side as on the French, though Hyde warned him that the Spaniard would not readily forgive the ravages which his French soldiers had committed.

But such a trifle could not daunt Bristol's spirits, and he arrived in Bruges in August 1656 with a good retinue and splendid equipage, and as he boasted he had brought enough of money to live on for a year, he quite dazzled the poverty-stricken Court of the young King.

However, Hyde tells that in six weeks he was as penniless as

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any of his countrymen, and although he had amused the King very well, Charles still had no particular liking for him and no objection to his going away to seek his fortune in the Spanish camp.

Bristol always preferred carving his way to fortune with his sword to being a hanger-on in a penniless Court, but his friends were aghast at such a plan. He merely smiled at their warnings.¹ His early familiarity with the Spanish language and Spanish ways of course made the project more hopeful, but Hyde says his "mercurial attempts" "did not suit the taste of the grave Spaniards, and an influential person, Don Alonzo de Cardenas, had been Ambassador to England, and had brought thence hearty dislike to all English and Lord Bristol in particular." He was now Intendant of affairs to the lately arrived Spanish Viceroy, Don Juan, and took pains to remind his master of the raids Bristol's French troops had made into Flanders.

But these difficulties only made the adventure more attractive to Bristol, who rode off to the Spanish camp without even troubling to secure a letter of introduction to the General.

He was naturally received very coldly and looked on with a good deal of suspicion, but he very soon managed to make himself agreeable to each distinguished person in the most appropriate way.

The Viceroy, an illegitimate son of the King of Spain, was a lively and accomplished gentleman, who soon discovered that Bristol was a delightful companion. When Don Juan was conversing with his Confessor, Bristol was able to "interpose his opinions on all subjects with such admirable acuteness" that his learning and "his exactness in the Spanish tongue made his parts wondered at by everybody." Further, Don Juan had a taste for astrology, and was delighted to find Bristol was an adept at constructing horoscopes. That agreement in taste sealed their friendship, and Bristol was kept busy star-gazing and foretelling all the honours awaiting Don Juan and all the advantage that awaited Spain from her alliance with the English Cavaliers. All this business gave Bristol an excuse for many private interviews and made every one believe that the two were really intimate.

With Don Alonzo de Cardenas Bristol took the line of praising his knowledge of State affairs, of which Hyde declared he was really "invincibly ignorant," and so prevailed even over

¹ Cl. S.P., III. 318. *Travels of the King*, Eva Scott, p. 251.

Charles Collects Troops

Cardenas' " parched stupidity." Bristol, with more good nature, explained to Hyde that poor Cardenas could speak neither English nor French with ease, and so when he was addressed in Spanish, " I found so sudden an effect that having received from you such a character of his dullness, he appeared to me a nimble spark."¹

General Caricina was more easy to fascinate. Bristol had led troops against him in Italy, and so they " fought their battles o'er again," and discussed their campaigns, and Bristol " knew how to take occasion both in his presence and his absence to magnify his conduct in signal actions."

When Charles, in the spring of 1656, had decided to accept the Spanish invitation to Flanders, a treaty had been drawn up by which he was promised a regular income of 3,000 crowns a month, and that as soon as he had secured a port for disembarkation Spanish troops should be provided for the invasion of England.

Naturally, Charles was a trump card for the Spaniards in their war with Cromwell, if indeed they had energy to use him. England was anything but satisfied under Cromwell's rule, Levellers and Presbyterians were both thinking the exiled legitimate King might prove a more comfortable ruler than the King Stork they had set up over themselves, and that it might be worth while to join Spain in setting him on the throne. But the most important advantage the Spaniards hoped to gain from Charles was the hope of detaching all the Irish troops who had enlisted in the French army. It would be a serious loss to France if regiment after regiment of veteran fighters stole across the Flemish frontier to re-enlist under the banner of their own King.

But the usual Spanish " mañana " nearly ruined these projects, and Bristol had to spend all his energy and all his blandishments on squeezing a few crowns at a time out of the Spanish authorities to pay the unfortunate men who soon flocked to enlist under their rightful King.

At first the Scottish General, Middleton, was put in command of these troops, and Bristol got leave to recruit for him and also got permission for Charles to give passes to his own messengers at the Flemish ports. This was looked on as a tremendous favour and took much negotiating to gain.

Hyde believed, of course, that Bristol might have got all he wanted much sooner ; Bristol replied that though he persecuted

¹ Cl. MSS., 211, fol. 254, September 1656.

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the Viceroy's secretary till midnight nothing could be done, as Don Juan was playing tennis, and finally signed the permission with his racquet still in his hand.

"I send you herewith," he writes, on the 8th of November, "a copy of the letter I wrote to Don Juan immediately upon the receipt of yours, by which you will see whether I am a slack solicitor or no. I pardon your anger, reasonable in the subject though wrong in the object. Let me take the liberty to tell you that if you will have business well dispatched at a secretariate so ill served as this, you must get some little blade of the office, who upon gratification may make it his business to see such things as appear as nothing and yet perhaps are of great consequence, punctually and timely dispatched, according to the memorials given by those that have other things to do than to wait whole days at an under-secretary's lodging making themselves too cheap to be able to do any business of a higher nature. I hope this letter will make you wise for the rest of your life. Your testy letter made me lose a whole day. In the meantime, God give you a better temper."¹

Hyde vowed in November, "that if only quarters were provided there would be four such regiments together as have not been seen in Flanders these many years." But for lack of pay these unlucky soldiers became mutinous and driven to plunder for food, which of course was discreditable to the King and angered the Spaniards, who could not see that they themselves were to blame. The officers were not better off; those of Bristol's and Ormonde's regiments came to Court in April 1658 to petition for relief, "as they were not able to subsist."

The regiments of whom Hyde prophesied such great things were the Duke of York's regiment, commanded by Ormonde's nephew McCarthy, now Lord Muskerry, the Duke of Gloster's, commanded by Taaf, and the other four regiments which were under Ormonde, Bristol, Middleton, and Wilmot.

Naturally Charles and his Council were nearly driven to distraction by lack of money to support these men. In October 1656 he was supposed to be paying about 400 men, a number that was soon doubled.

It must not, however, be forgotten that Spain was no longer rich with the wealth of all the Indies, but found it extremely

¹ CL MSS., fol. 35, L. iii.

difficult to pay her way. Don Juan was in constant lack of funds and was in great difficulties with the Flemish authorities over quartering the troops already in existence. There had been endless difficulties over the forces Lorraine and Condé had brought to the Spanish side; so naturally neither Spaniards nor Flemings were very eager to welcome the English and Irish exiles who were crowding into the country.

Bristol was, of course, expected to get all the money needed. "The sense I have of the distress his Majesty has been in for want of quarters for his men," he wrote to Ormonde,¹ "has made me almost wild. You would pity me if you knew how I have been obliged to trot myself every day to three or four several offices to get that dispatched but this morning, which was promised and certainly intended the very next day I came to Maubeuge." He had got quarters for sixty men, but Hyde was still unhappy, and Bristol wrote to him in a very different tone from the way he explained matters to Ormonde. "I know not whether my absence from the army may chance cost the King some few days' subsistence of his men, and consequently your fat sides some grunts and groans." A few days later he wrote: "I send you herewithal a noble present of a rare cheese, knowing that to preserve your favour at court it is necessary to bribe you."

Hyde retorted it was "the worst cheese in the world," and that quarters must positively be found for the four regiments, but by the end of November even Bristol was in despair and could make no more jokes against the Chancellor; but then things improved, he secured orders for billeting the King's troops in four cities, but he urged that the King should "pinch upon a small supply" at present, as he hoped the expedition against England might soon be ready to start, and then the Spaniards would be ashamed to see the King starve.

But the whole of Bristol's time and energy had to be devoted to getting pay for these regiments. Hyde could not understand how, being in constant company with Don Juan, it was not possible to get money out of him, and scolded Bristol roundly, saying it was obvious that having got what they wanted of Charles the Spaniards were very indifferent as to whether he lived or died.

In December 1656 Bristol rebelled against these constant complaints, telling Hyde he was ready to serve the King any way

¹ Eva Scott, *Travels of the King*, pp. 257, 263.

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he might be bid, "but not against my reason to be importunate." Hyde persisted, thinking Bristol slack. Bristol only answered with affectionate chaff, which made his worried friend more exasperated. "God make you less troublesome to your friends," wrote Bristol. "You are much mistaken," he explains, "if you think these ministers are to be wrought upon to mend their pace much less their purse in anything, by tenderness to the King's uneasiness of life." And another time, "you are pleasant to mention to me the particular sum (required). You may be sure I shall not fail to let him know that upon mature consideration you find that your cushion will not be easy unless the sum be precisely 10,000 crowns!"

But when Ormonde was in difficulty, Bristol wrote in a very different strain. (September 17, 1657.) "In your concernment I fear not to be importunate or to render myself unacceptable to Don Juan, since he knows our friendship to be such as the more I persecute him for you the more he will esteem me. However, I wish you were here, not to speak for yourself in a matter of interest in which (*sauf le respect que je vous dois*) you are so very a goose, but only to look for yourself. For believe me the presence of such a person as you, bearing distress with such moderation, cannot but work more powerfully upon such a nature as Don Juan's than all my rhetoric."

The same month he told Ormonde the Spaniards could not do for them all they wished, but sent 100,000 crowns for the expedition to England and 50,000 for the King's and Duke's campaign, and when they had captured a port, a Spanish army should follow to hold it.

No troubles could keep such men as Hyde and Ormonde from chaffing Bristol, and he returned quite as good as he got. Even when Ormonde was most vexed with what they ignorantly believed was Bristol's slackness in their affairs, he wrote to Hyde on the 22nd of September, 1657, at ten o'clock at night, that knowing Hyde loves letters better than venison or than the writer does his ease, he has been persuaded by Dick Bellamy to write at this time of night with a pen that would make Hyde swear. If after the reading of Lord Bristol's letter Hyde can sleep with that ingredient added to his gout and gravel, he will not need the prescription to hear sermons. Meantime he himself grew cholerick at Bristol's proposing they should have a conference with

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Surrender of St. Ghislain

the Spaniards, after saying they would not be heard and also when he ought to know it was not possible for the King or anyone with him to get to the Spaniard at all !¹

At this time the French held an important fortress, St. Ghislain, only four leagues from Brussels, the Huguenot General Schomberg was in command ; but most of the garrison were exiled Irish, and their officers, as it happened, were mostly of one family and connections of Ormonde's private secretary, George Lane. The Irishmen were eager to do whatever would be for the advantage of their young King, and offered to surrender the town in spite of their General. The Spaniards proposed that Ormonde should enter into communication with the Irish officers, but the Marquis indignantly refused to be party to such a piece of treason. Don Juan then sent for Bristol, who was delighted to get any real appointment, as he had only been serving as a volunteer in the Spanish army. He had also begun to notice that the Spaniards were becoming jealous of his intimacy with Don Juan, so he was particularly glad of a mission that took him from the army to Brussels.

It was now winter and very cold, and the Spanish troops besieging St. Ghislain were in anything but a happy state of mind. On arriving there Bristol began by getting into communication with the Irish officers in the fortress, and then begged Lord Taaf to send on his Irish regiment to influence their countrymen. For some reason only a hundred of Taaf's men were sent to Don Juan, but luckily the rest of Taaf's regiment took the matter into their own hands and joined Don Juan and Bristol before Ghislain. Meantime Schomberg, who was an active and observant man, had begun to suspect that all was not well. He noticed how many Irish were deserting from the French service in other places, and when the fortress of Condé fell into Spanish hands through the mutiny of the Irish soldiers, he became so uneasy as to give up a projected visit to Paris and remain on the watch at Ghislain. He further noticed that his orders were often neglected and that his officers were constantly whispering in knots, and at last he was lucky enough to intercept a letter to his Lieutenant-Colonel which told all the plot. Schomberg had always had a high opinion of this officer, who, Hyde tells us, "was superior in abilities to that kind of people." One would like to know what kind?

¹ Cl. S.P., III. 361.

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Was he superior to all other colonels, or to the Irish nation in general? All we hear was that Schomberg, naturally indignant, ordered the superior gentleman to instant execution. And then, like the climax of a play, the fatal preparations were interrupted by a trumpet from Don Juan, who informed him the Spaniards were sure of the place and offered him good terms on the understanding that the Lieutenant-Colonel were not harmed. Schomberg had no resource but to accept the terms, and was given leave to depart with any of the men who chose to follow him. But the most of the Irish preferred to join with their countrymen in the Spanish service, and were formed into a regiment which in a short time was commanded by Bristol and afterwards by Colonel Farrel.

Hyde explains that Bristol was liberally rewarded. "Besides," he adds, goodnaturedly, "the consideration he took himself out of the moneys assigned to the officers and soldiers." In telling the story of St. Ghislain, Hyde also carefully omits to say that when the assault began, Bristol scrambled up on the works, shouting to the garrison, "What, are ye mad to fight against your own King?" On which the soldiers threw down their arms.¹

"If all be reported true," wrote Hyde to Ormonde, "the affair of St. Ghislain by this time is well over, and then our friend will be too high to be found fault with. Yet a little chiding will do him no harm, which he will take from you." Every one was ready to take either praise or blame from Ormonde, but Bristol was a little tired of Hyde's incessant growls. Even the King did not write as warmly as might have been expected, he was worried at the responsibility for the new Irish troops and wrote with a sneer at Bristol's star-gazing. "Pray God that Taurus be as successful to him as Aries has been, and then I hope he will think a little more of terrestrial things and not run himself and his friends into inconvenience."

Yet for all Hyde and Charles might say, the St. Ghislain affair laid the foundations of the King's fortunes as well as those of Bristol. Charles was complimented and thanked and invited to collations and balls, played tennis with Don Juan, and received visits from all the nobility.

Bristol now had an assured position as head of a regiment, instead of being an idle exile begging for charity. But he lost

¹ Eva Scott, *Travels of the King*, p. 292.

James of York Joins his Brother

no opportunity of furthering the King's affairs. He was also so patriotic as not to rest content with Spanish honours and Spanish praise. He assured the King that the honour he had now acquired would reflect great credit on the English cause, and so it would be very advantageous to his Majesty to make him once again Secretary of State. It was true that at the moment there was not more work to do than one secretary could manage, but it had always been the custom to have two, and Bristol assured the King he would not meddle with anything outside his own line, that he could do much more with the Spaniards if he had a formal position, and that he would be quite ready to resign if desired when the King was happily restored to his kingdom. Hyde explains that Bristol felt he was safe in making the promise, as he was as sure as was Cromwell that there never would be any Restoration, and so he only wanted to make himself as comfortable as he could in Brussels, "all places being alike and equal to him." In a list of the King's household drawn up in April 1657 Bristol's name is found; the old Earl of Norwich, Rochester, and Culpepper were also of the household with the Bishop of Derry, and Ormonde was indispensable and soon joined them.

Now that the King's regiments were beginning to take form the Spaniards urged him to order his brother James to resign his French commission and take the head of his brother's troops in the Spanish service. James, indeed, had not much choice, for Cromwell's new treaty with France insisted on all the elder members of the House of Stuart leaving the country.

James therefore obeyed his brother but obeyed most unwillingly. He had been serving under the great Turenne, who treated him with real affection and confidence, even leaving the young Prince in his place at the head of the army when he went on leave. James was popular with his men as well as with the General, and at the brilliant Court of France he had already formed the friendship with the young King Louis that was to stand him in such good stead in his second exile of 1688.

He was now asked to sacrifice ambition, amusement, and luxury to be a hanger-on at the Spanish headquarters, or a member of his brother's half-starved Court, where when he did appear he was treated with little affection or ceremony.

Even James's favourite attendants were looked on with jealousy by the irritable, irritating courtiers of Charles. The boy

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was particularly attached to two of his gentlemen, Charles, son of the Sir John Berkeley who had been in attendance on the late King, and young Jermyn, nephew of the Queen's secretary. Charles disapproved of both these men and tried to introduce an opposing influence by forcing James to include Henry Bennet, the secretary of Lord Bristol, in his household. James was extremely indignant at the interference with his private affairs, the more so as he detested Bennet, who he vowed was so void of respect that he could have only been placed in his household to act the part of a spy. This was a curious cause of complaint, as in later days Bennet was blamed for his pompous ceremony of manner. James was even more vexed when he found that before commanding the troops which had enlisted in the name of the King of England he was expected to take an oath of fidelity to Spain. When he spoke to Bristol on the subject, Bristol, who no doubt was very well pleased with himself for having got the King's affairs into a hopeful condition, "flew into a very high passion," and spoke so loud that the King overheard and came in. But he did not come as James's ally, but insisted on the oath to Spain being taken, and further agreed with Bristol that James would not have made all this difficulty of his own notion, but that someone had been influencing him against his brother and Spain. James entirely refused to give away his friends, but matters were smoothed over for the time by Bristol recovering his temper and making some sort of apology.

However, it was pretty plain to James that he had sacrificed his French prospects in vain, and that he had no chance of a dignified or even possible existence under his brother's control, and resolved to cut the knot by running away and taking his favourites with him. When he had got as far as Utrecht, he sent a letter back to his brother, expressing regret that "the interference of violent persons" had driven him to take this step.¹

Charles and his Court were filled with dismay, the scandal was great. What would the Spaniards think of their new allies? What would all the world think?

Bristol was deeply offended, for it was clear that he and his protégé Bennet were the persons blamed by the Duke's household, and a fit of the stone added to his troubles. He wrote to the King on the 14th of January, 1657: "The first two days of his High-

¹ Eva Scott, *Travels of the King*, p. 281.

Duke of York Takes Flight

ness the Duke of York's unimaginable sally, anger and amazement put me out of all temper to write to your Majesty, and since then I have been visited with the torment alone capable to contest it with that vexation, from which my first entire exemption hath been this day which I have made use of to speak to Don John (*sic*). I apprehend from it no ill effect upon your business with the Spaniard, Don John being so well possessed of the whole proceeding, but I much apprehend the ill effects in England." He believed the Duke had not been influenced by Sir John Berkeley alone, but "by some concurrence of all those about him." It is strange that such an experienced courtier as Bristol should not have realised the folly of treating a high-spirited young soldier as if he were a child in the nursery, but this was not the only time that Digby's hot temper spoilt the cause he had at heart, which at any rate proves he was not quite such an accomplished hypocrite as his enemies would like to make him out.

Bristol goes on to urge the King to omit no arts however contrary to reason and decorum to make up the breach with his brother, and finally begged the King if necessary to sacrifice him himself to the Duke's anger, "knowing his Majesty's excellent nature too well to entertain a doubt of losing my place in your Majesty's royal heart."

To Hyde Bristol wrote, "this day hath been my first journey abroad since the terriblest fit of the gravel that ever a poor man endured." He was convinced that much of the trouble with the Duke was due to Father Peter Talbot, brother of swaggering Dick Talbot afterwards created Earl of Tyrconnel. Many years were to pass before the stately Ormonde, disgusted by his insolence, had to ask the King if it were His Majesty's pleasure he should put off his doublet to fight Dick Talbot, but at no time did any of the three Talbot brothers bear a good character among gentlemen. Peter acted as agent for the various Royalist plots that were being hatched in England, but Bristol left it to Hyde to say how dangerous Peter might be: "Your judgments are clearer than those of an angry man." And again Bristol writes: "Concerning our ghostly father, I conclude with you that it is not a season for the King to appear in anything against him, yet I hope I shall so order matters as to rid us finally of him for the good of his soul as well as the ease of his body, by having him sent to a more religious life, unless he may go as you say suddenly into

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England, for in that case possibly he may be a martyr, which is all the hurt I wish him. God forgive you your uncharitableness of wishing him in a well."¹

James continued to write like an angry school-boy, and found no expressions too severe to use about Bristol's bad behaviour, want of sense, and so on. The inevitable end was, that the only man who never lost his good temper nor dignity, Ormonde, was sent after the Duke, Charles pawning his George to raise money for the journey. Hyde, who knew James intimately, says that from the time the boy was fourteen he had loved intrigue so well that he was but too much inclined to listen to anyone who tempted him to it. But when we consider the bringing up he had had, and the hotbed of plots into which he was plunged in Paris, we can only wonder at the honesty he often showed.

At last Don Juan was driven to end the scandal and mediate, and promised if James would come back to Brussels that he would "interfere for the accommodation of all things." This worry distracted all the King's Councillors in the early part of 1657, Hyde and Bristol discussing it endlessly, Bristol declaring he was not in fault for not answering Hyde's questions, though he admitted that in his own letters "there might be somewhat in the expressions too subtle for so fat a man's understanding."

And then he carries the war into the enemy's country. "Is it not a strange thing," he jeers, "that you should not have had the care of sending me copies of what the Duke writ to the King and of the King's answer, and which way those sent to the Duke are directed to steer? But that in such a *rencontre* as this I must be made ridiculous to Don Juan when he asks my advice how to conform his part unto that of those employed by his Majesty? But can I wonder at this or at anything when upon my Lord of Ormonde writing to me that he had not the money to bear George Lane's charges hitherward and your telling me that the King was fain to pawn his George to enable my Lord of Ormonde for his journey, I take occasion to represent unto Don Juan what I think fit upon the point of seeing such a person as my Lord of Ormonde reduced to such extremities and he tells me, though with excuses for the littleness of it, that my Lord of Ormonde had 500 crowns a month pension, as duly paid him as the King's; whereof it could not but appear to him I had no kind of know-

¹ Cl. S.P., III. 321, January 1657.

James Made Captain-General

ledge. How the devil, if I be thus used, is it possible that I can persuade him of our three's being in so perfect an intelligence together which certainly is necessary enough to His Majesty's service to give you the care of not exposing him thus."¹

After vainly trying all manner of pressure, Charles at last had to give in and send Ormonde a second time with his promise to agree to all James's terms if he on his side would promise not to take advice from his mother nor Jermyn.

Bennet was sent off to Spain as Ambassador, and Berkeley, who apologised, was before long made Baron Berkeley of Stratton, and Bristol managed to smooth things over so well that in August 1657 he could write to Ormonde that the Duke of York's gracious usage increased daily, and as for Berkeley "we are hand and glove. Indeed, sir, without raillery I cannot say, but he behaves very decently to me." Only, fond of schemes as Bristol was, he found Berkeley's imaginations were beyond him, for he found him "possessed of a thousand projects in which there was neither head nor tail."

Meantime, James settled down into army life, he was Captain-General of all the forces raised for Charles, and was given a bodyguard of fifty horse under the command of his friend Charles Berkeley. During active service he was paid an allowance of £200 a month, and he soon won the admiration and liking of his troops. Bristol had to beg the King to warn him not to expose himself too rashly, "it may do well for once to purchase applause, but should he do it a second time, instead of being admired, he would be censured."

Charles hoped to get leave himself to join in the Spanish campaigns through Bristol's influence, but Don Juan had no money to spare to provide a proper military outfit for royalty, and Bristol wrote explaining that the King was not invited to the army entirely because it was not possible to receive him suitably.

However, on a chance visit to Dunkirk, in company with Ormonde, the King found the Spaniards really assaulting the fortress and Don Juan swearing come what might he would have it this time. Charles refused to be kept in safety at a distance, and pressed right up to the front, where Ormonde's horse was shot under him. The Spaniards gained the works and Don Juan was

¹ Eva Scott, *Travels of the King*, pp. 283-4.

With an Army in Flanders

very courteous to his visitors, giving Ormonde a noble Spanish horse in place of the one killed.¹

By the end of 1658, both Bristol and Ormonde resigned the command of their regiments, as it had been decided that all Colonels of regiments should attend the service in person.² Bristol, indeed, the only one of the Colonels who had been with the army, the other regiments had been commanded by their Lieut.-colonels, and Ormonde at least had been too busy to attend to military duties, for he had been off in England in disguise to see what chance of success any of the Royalist plots might have.³

Possibly it was owing to this order that the Duke of York ceased to be Colonel of the regiment called after him, but ill-natured people did not let the chance of making mischief slip, and Bristol complained that villainous matter had been raised against him for taking the King's troops from the Duke to hand over to the Prince of Condé.

The great Condé, after being the idol of the Fronde, had fallen before the power of the Cardinal, and had joined the Spaniards against his own country. He quite realised the value he was to them, and also how much he would have it in his power to do for his kinsman the exiled King of England if ever an invasion of England could be managed.

Condé had been already displeased by certain Irish soldiers in his command preferring to serve under James. James very sensibly said anything was better than a quarrel with Condé, and he yielded "the more readily because his French cousin was the only General in the Spanish forces who commanded his respect."

But the jealousies among the troops became a more and more serious difficulty. The English exiles objected to being made into regiments with the Irish, and the Spaniards grew jealous and refused to have any English regiments formed at all.

Although the Spaniards were glad of Condé's adherence and of the troops he had brought with him, they were both jealous of his fame and suspicious of his intentions, while the great General was disposed to stand a good deal on his dignity and not to endure the smallest slight.

In this tension of parties, Bristol felt it was all important to

¹ *Life of Ormonde. Burgclere*, p. 420.

² *Cal. S.P. Dom., Nicholas to Middleton*.

³ *Eva Scott, Travels of the King*, p. 301.

Bristol in Retirement

keep Condé in a good temper, and devised a scheme of joining all Charles's regiments with the French who had followed Condé and put him in command of all. To carry out this grand plan, Bristol used all his powers of persuasion with James. It was true that the young Duke had begun his military career under the orders of Turenne, but then he had been almost a child, while now a man of twenty-four, who had exercised independent command, he did not at all see the advantage of coming down to an inferior position and allowing his brother's subjects to obey a foreign General, so he "assumed an attitude of passive resistance, an art which he possessed in exasperating perfection."¹ The Spaniards, in their jealousy of Condé, were enchanted by James's independence, but Condé naturally was deeply offended, and never treated James with intimacy again.

Bristol's credit suffered much by this failure, of which his enemies were ready to make the most.

The Garter King, Walker, wrote to Secretary Nicholas in April 1658: "We are dead in discourse and no person so fallen in appearance as your great brother Secretary"; and again, "Lord Bristol is gone to Ghent and lets his beard grow. Hence rumours of some private undertaking. I hear ministers here are unsatisfied with him." Also another letter to Nicholas says: "I think Hyde is glad that he is alone, Lord Bristol being retired" (April 1658), and in May Ross writes: "I cannot tell where Lord Bristol is, but none wish him here again."

Whether this retirement was entirely due to the Condé affair, or to various events in Bristol's private life, will require another chapter to consider.

Walsingham, Bristol's Catholic kinsman and secretary, turned like every one in trouble to Ormonde, lamenting the Chancellor's high displeasure with him and complaining of the calumnies that were being circulated; his zeal for his religion, he said, never yet transported him to betray his duty to the King or his trust.²

This trouble between Walsingham and Hyde may be a foreshadowing of the irrevocable breach that was going to separate Bristol and the Chancellor.

¹ Eva Scott, *Travels of the King*, p. 354.

² Carte MSS., CCXIII. 319.

XIV

GOSSIP

IT IS DOUBTLESS TRUE that the fire of adversity may bring out the true gold in a character, but too often it only hardens weakness or folly into an unchangeable defect. The squalid anxieties and hopeless idleness of the exiles' life made Charles daily more cynical and selfish, and James more sulky and suspicious. Hyde became more and more cantankerous, while Bristol's ambitions had to be satisfied with the successes of a soldier of fortune. He had not only himself to think of; Lady Bristol had managed to scrape together a pittance to support her family while they were children, but not to provide any future for them. By stripping himself of all the property he had or hoped to inherit, Bristol had enabled his eldest son to make a rich marriage, and it seems that the second was inexpensively educated in a Jesuit College through the favour of Mazarin, but there were still two girls to be provided for.

The eldest daughter, Diana, was a girl of strong will and did not get on with her mother. To compose these differences, Bristol sent for his daughter, and in April 1657 the English Government granted a pass to Lady Diana Digby to go to her father in Flanders on private business.¹ He was too sensible a man to introduce her to the rowdy Court that followed Charles from Brussels to Bruges and back again, so he settled the girl as a boarder at the English convent in Ghent, which was about midway between those two cities. Hyde used to make merry over Bristol's "admir'd Abbess," but Mary Knatchbull, Abbess of this English convent, was a lady of breeding and intellect, well worthy to be admired. She was a kinswoman of the famous Father Talbot who was so busy on secret service, so when Lady Bristol sent over reports on English politics, she wrote as often to the Abbess as to Hyde.

¹ Cal. S.P. Dom.

Diana Digby's Marriage

Further, the ladies of the convent were "noted for their beauty and virtue," so Diana was very safely bestowed in pleasant society and under the care of her mother's correspondent.

But the girl had been bred up among her Puritan relatives in a horror of popery, and was very ill-pleased to find herself in a convent, although her father assured her that as he usually lodged in Ghent and not at Court, she need only eat at the convent when he was out of town, and that it was a great compliment on the Abbess's part to take her in.

She had not, however, been there long when at one of the houses she visited with her father she met a young half-witted man of good family and fortune, the Baron Moll, who fell in love with her. Lord Bristol was delighted, and considered it a mercy of providence that the daughter of an exile should have the chance of marrying into one of the first families of Flanders. Possibly Lady Diana thought no suitor was to be rejected who would take her out of the convent; at any rate no time was lost, for Hyde says, "Bristol did not even delay to find what the bridegroom's future really was"; he obliged his daughter to become a Catholic, and "frankly gave her up to perpetual misery which she entered into from the day of her marriage. This would have brought much grief of mind to another parent, but Bristol was of that rare constitution that worldly things never gave him trouble, for himself was still first, if not sole, in all considerations, and with this kind of providence he made provision for two of his children."

It is a sad and shameful story, yet we must remember that it is reported by Bristol's most bitter enemy, who works himself up into chivalrous indignation over a marriage which would have been looked on as a very commonplace matter by most of his contemporaries. In the seventeenth century, the inclinations of a young woman were no more considered than they had been in Greece or Rome. Among the most high-minded families, the amount of the dowry and the rank of the suitor mattered far more than his morals or his wits. In the will of Buckingham's brother-in-law special provision is made for the marriage of his son, a congenital idiot, who fortunately died before any woman was sacrificed to him; and as Hyde more than once alludes, without any particular pity, to the case of unhappy Lady Portland, who was tied to Buckingham's imbecile brother, we cannot help

suspecting he would not have expended so much sympathy on Lady Diana if he had not detested Lady Diana's father.

Lady Diana, when in trouble, like most other people, turned to Ormonde for help. By February 1660 Hyde's old affection for her father had grown cold, and it was to Ormonde she wrote from Ghent to ask him to use his influence with Carricinas to further some personal suit of her own,¹ and a few days later she thanks him for his kindness, and asks again for his mediation on her husband's behalf. On the 20th of March she wrote again that "certain dunces from their unacquaintance with such nobleness as his lordship's had expressed a doubt" of his intentions and begged him to repeat his promises.

The poor lady is mentioned from time to time in letters from the English colony. Father Gilbert Talbot wrote to Nicholas in 1658, "my Lord Bristol has had much ado to reconcile his daughter with the Baron her husband, a quarrel having arisen from his jealousy of her, which came to blows. When she left Brussels she would not go in the same coach with him."² Her troubles seem to have had an effect on her brain, for so late as 1674 a letter to Williamson, Secretary of State, describes her extraordinary behaviour at Leghorn, where she was waiting to sail for Spain. She had sent word to the Viceroy of Naples that she was coming to see the town, and he returned answer that for the service of his King he could not suffer her to enter within the gates. She sent the British Consul to remonstrate against such treatment of a lady, but he told her if she came she would put the town into a rebellion. Sbirri were sent to remove her, without even allowing her time to eat, and she nearly pistolled one of them. And that is the last we know of Baroness Moll—she left no children and apparently no further records of her sad life.

Having settled his daughter, Bristol now returned to his own affairs, and especially to consider the prospects of his soul. "Hitherto," says Hyde, "he had preserved his reputation as a Protestant unblemished, although in France the Jesuits courted him with wonderful application. Before his expedition to Italy, he lodged for months at Alby in a Jesuit College, and there spent his time in hard study. The Superior passed many compliments on the honour they received in entertaining such a noble person, saying he hoped the observation he had made of their course of

¹ Carte MSS., XIII. 267, 518

² S.P. Dom. Cal.

Bristol a Convert to Rome

life and the arguments he had found in their books had given him such a reverence that he would now throw himself into the arms of the Church. He answered, there were still some arguments which from difference of education or nature seemed infallible to them but did not convince him, but with much modesty made confession of his own weakness and admiration for them and so took leave. But now he found what had done him no harm in France did him no good in Flanders."

But Hyde does not seem to date the step he now took correctly, as he says it was due to his disappointment at the failure of Booth's Rising in 1659. In 1659 Bristol had started on a new and delightful adventure and was hurrying across France to join the King on the Spanish borders. But in 1658 he had retired to Ghent and let his beard grow, while Lord Norwich was jesting on the little comfort the exiles took in Bristol's astrological prognostications. For it was then that the hopes founded on the Sealed Knot plot were shattered, and Ormonde found some difficulty in avoiding the fate of its other leaders. The Royalists had built great expectations on this plot, though Cromwell contemptuously spoke of it as a "little fiddling thing." Now what prospects lay before the exiles? It is no wonder that a man of Bristol's restless energy was bound to discover some new panacea for the woes of himself and his friends. He had no hopes for the King's restoration but by the help of Catholic arms, and we must remember that every great Power in the world was then Catholic, while the Church to which Hyde clung with such loyalty was proscribed, and at the best was merely local and English. Bristol's taste as well as his hopes drew him towards Spain, with her memories of world empire, her romantic dignity, and the possibility that she might be generous. His clever cousin, Sir Kenelm Digby, had debated the Roman claims with him, his secretary Walsingham was an ardent proselytiser, while Father Peter Talbot was unwearied in urging that Charles himself had no chance of help from Spain unless he embraced the religion to which she was devoted.

Hyde tells what followed. Bristol, he says, had been to the seashore with the King, hoping for a summons to England, and being disappointed "had to return to his retreat in Ghent, to the admired Abbess and his beloved daughter. When one door was shut he always went to the next one open; he had got as much as he ever could out of his religion, and it was like to do him no

Gossip

further service." So at Ghent he pretended to be very ill, sent for doctors and priests and the Abbess, who was a better casuist than any, to administer consolation, also to Courteney, the provincial of the English Jesuits. Then he sent an urgent message to his friends Ormonde and Hyde, conjuring them to hasten to him, as he was very ill. The enemy was in the neighbourhood making the journey dangerous, and the season was very unpleasant; the friends debated what was to be done, and decided that one of them would be enough to console the sick man; and as Hyde was gouty and never in good health, Ormonde, as always when anything disagreeable was on hand, undertook the journey, and Hyde was left in attendance on the King. Bristol received Ormonde with a long rigmarole about his penitence for his past sins, his agonies of illness and the rest, and then confessed to him that he had changed his religion. He begged Ormonde to tell the King that he had wished to keep his conversion secret, behaving in all things as before and even going to the English Church, but that his confessor had assured him secrecy was a sin, and that not even the Pope could give him permission for such a concealment. Ormonde answered the sick man quietly that he was sorry for his change of faith and would tell the King.

Hyde says he himself was much more surprised than Ormonde had been. He was indeed incapable of understanding how anyone could be false to that Church which satisfied his own heart and intellect, and he does not seem ever to have forgiven Bristol his change. Bristol continued to treat him with affection and confidence, but the root of bitterness was now planted in Hyde that was to grow till it overshadowed both their lives.

Carte, the biographer of Lord Ormonde, who must have learned the story from Ormonde himself, tells it much more good-naturedly, saying that Bristol had long withstood the teasing of the Roman Catholic priests who pressed him to embrace their communion, "but when argument failed, their design was carried out by an artifice."

Carte goes on to relate how Bristol fell sick of a violent fever, and the physicians told him his case was desperate, and he had nothing to think of but another world. Soon after a Jesuit was sent in to him who pressed him much now that there were no hopes of his recovery at least to die in the true Church. The Earl, notwithstanding the extremity he was in and the weakness of

reason which that of the body occasions in such cases, was not yet persuaded to turn, but the Jesuit redoubling his attack told him that if he would give them any hope of his conversion, God might possibly work a miracle in his favour ! at least all his Society would pray for him, and "boggled" a promise from him that if he recovered through their prayers, he would profess himself a Roman Catholic. The Earl, being very desirous to live, gave him his promise. Being ashamed to turn a second time, he continued always in that profession, but there is reason to think he was never a Roman Catholic at heart. For he was not only free in declaring against the Court of Rome, but he never had a Romish priest in his family after he came into England, nor was one ever known to come near him. His daughter, the Countess of Sunderland, being one day asked about it, answered that he did not care to speak on the subject, but it was always her opinion that her father never was really in his judgment a Roman Catholic.*

Hyde goes on to relate how, when Bristol had recovered, he came to Brussels and was careful that his first appearance in public should be at Mass, where Don Juan and other Spanish grandees might see him. Then he went to the King, who only made merry, chaffing the shocked Chancellor for ever having imagined Bristol would stick to any religion, and then laughing over Bristol's scrupulous conscience, asked him what had carried him over to the Church of Rome. He answered, it is reported, quite ignoring the Lady Abbess, "Please, your Majesty, it was writing a book in favour of the Reformation." Whereon the King retorted, "Pray, my Lord, then write one in favour of Popery."

Bristol was extremely glad to be laughed at, but was troubled to find that Hyde took it all very differently, confessing that he could not dissemble the trouble he felt, nor see how Bristol in the future could ever be of any service to the King. And further, although he still protested his constancy in friendship, Hyde was sure that those who had made Bristol give up his faith would never let him keep a friendship with one who had ever been so opposite to their practice and principles. Hyde indeed believed it possible that the King had been so merry because he knew Bristol's changed creed would make it impossible for him to be longer Privy Secretary or Councillor, but that he was very well content that Hyde should

* Carte, III. 690.

do all the plain speaking. Bristol was, however, equally surprised and displeased when he had to return the signet next day. This was not what he expected, and it "demolished a great crop of hopes," and showed plainly the King's dislike of what he had done.

Hyde writes that though Bristol continued to make the same professions of friendship as before, in his heart he laid all the blame of this disgrace on the Chancellor, and never forgave it. Hyde always measured other men by himself, and as he could not forgive Bristol his change of Church, he was convinced that Bristol cherished equal enmity to him. There is absolutely no evidence of this. Again and again Bristol wrote in evident surprise and pain at Hyde's growing coldness, and the final breach with the Chancellor seems to have come on him like a thunderbolt. The breach did surely not begin on Bristol's side.

In his autobiography Hyde emphasises this view of the matter, explaining that Bristol, not having patience to wait for a change for the better in their affairs, declared himself a Roman Catholic "that he might with undoubted success apply himself to the service of Spain." "The scandal of this apostasy in a sworn Councillor of the King made it necessary for the King to remove him from both his posts by the laws of England. And this displacing he imputed entirely to his old friend the Chancellor, with whom till that minute he had held a very firm friendship. The King had long known he was very indifferent in all matters of religion and looked on the outward profession, if any, as depending wholly upon the convenience or discommodity that might be enjoyed by it. With such discourse he entertained the King, who would never speak seriously with him on the subject. He described the Abbess and an ignorant old Jesuit who converted him in such a ridiculous way and administered such occasion for mirth that his Majesty thought laughing at him the best reproof. And the Earl bore that so well and gratefully from the King and from his other familiar friends, too, for he so dissembled his taking anything ill of the Chancellor, that he was never better company than upon argument."¹

Whether Bristol's change of creed was due to spiritual fear or ambition, it proved from a worldly point of view to be an immense blunder. He not only lost his offices in the Court of Charles, but Hyde relates with malicious satisfaction he gained nothing from

¹ *Cl., Ct. Reb.*, IV. 80-4.

Rumours about the King

Spain. "After the first congratulations for the becoming a Christian which those people do very liberally make for a few days, he found no sunshine from the change of his climate and no proffer of place or pension from Spain, and the Pope only said, '*Tu conversus converte fratres tuos.*'" Don Juan appeared more reserved than formerly, for Don Alonzo and Caricina were markedly jealous and had complained to Spain, when Don Juan was reproved for his friendliness with the Englishman. One result of Bristol's conversion was that in April 1660 Lady Bristol heard that even she, a Russell, was rumoured to have deserted her Church! She writes to Ormonde to assure him the report was unfounded, and that her faith is still that in which she was bred up and from which she trusted never to depart.¹

But so many English gentlemen followed Bristol's example more or less openly that gossip began to discuss whether the King himself were not disposed to please his Spanish hosts by changing his creed. Naturally such a change would have ended any chance of his sitting on the throne of England, so his enemies made themselves very busy in spreading these reports.

Hyde admits bitterly² that in the King's wretched condition, some about him "began to think of providing a religion as well as other conveniences that might be grateful to the people and place where and with whom they were like to reside. They exercised their thoughts how to get handsomely from the Protestant religion." They were so sure the King's fortunes depended on the friendliness of the Catholic Powers, that only his own "great steadiness" kept them for a time from changing their creed. Yet it was rumoured that Ormonde actually had seen the King kneeling at Mass in Brussels, but had said nothing, considering that it was not his business to meddle as the King had not taken him into his confidence on the subject.³

But most of these reports about Charles belong to the time when he was at Fuentarabia in 1659. It is said that during that visit Culpepper met Bristol and Bennet accompanying the King from Mass, and went up to Bennet, saying, "I see what you are at. Is this the way to bring your master home to his three kingdoms? Well, sir, if ever you and I live to see England together, I'll have your head or you shall have mine." This style of attack is so characteristic of Culpepper that one can hardly doubt it is

¹ Carte MSS.

² Cl., *Gr. Reb.*, III. 1045.

³ Carte, IV. 108-11.

true. It is clear that the feelings among the King's servants were growing uncontrollable, and if Hyde talked to Bristol about his conversion in the style of Culpepper it is no wonder that their old friendship grew somewhat strained.

Ormonde afterwards told Bishop Hough that at Fuentarabia, Bennet complained to him that the King was ruining his chances with France and Spain by not declaring himself a Catholic, and begged Ormonde to use his influence to bring His Majesty to a more reasonable mind. Ormonde, as was to be expected, declined to do anything of the sort. Bennet persisted that as the King really was a Catholic, it was not asking much to get him to declare himself publicly. But Bristol then came to Ormonde in great agitation, inveighing against Bennet's folly and madness. Ormonde, with his usual imperturbable good temper, answered that it was very strange anyone should have the assurance to persuade the King to declare himself what he was not. Bristol answered that the King certainly was a Catholic, but to declare himself so would ruin his chances in England; and as for the promises of France, he added bitterly, there was no dependence to be put on them, for they would do more to gain one frontier garrison into their hands than to get the Catholic religion established all over Europe. The Duke allowed that Bristol judged very rightly, but excused himself from meddling, as it was by no means proper that he should show he had observed the King, and he never even told the incident to Hyde till they had both returned to England.

Whether Charles did or did not join the Church of Rome at this time will never be known to a certainty, for he was shrewd enough to realise what was at stake, and to keep his own counsel.

But according to a letter which he wrote nine years later to the General of the Jesuits in Rome, he had by then become anxious for opportunities to "practise the rites of the Roman Catholic religion without exciting in our Court the shadow of a doubt that we belong to their persuasion."¹ But he does not say how long he had wished to do so.

Unfortunately, though Charles was too wise to spoil his prospects by openly turning Romanist, he did not remember that religion was not the only subject that might shock his future subjects, and that treading the primrose path that is so fatally

¹ A. Lang, *The Valets' Tragedy*, p. 234.

open to *Les rois en exil* might be as damaging to his prospects as a new creed.

Ormonde was disheartened and disgusted by the squalid amusements in which the King indulged, and wrote to Hyde "what would be too bold a lamentation in anyone else," continuing that no one would care to join in any plans for a Restoration or trust Charles as a leader of an expedition, for the King's "immoderate delight in empty, effeminate, and vulgar conversation has become an irresistible part of his nature."¹

Well might Andrew Marvell describe the second Charles as

Of a tall stature and of sable hue
Much like the son of Kish, that lofty Jew
Twelve years complete he suffered in exile
And kept his father's asses all the while.

The most unsavoury story connected with the Court is remarkable in this at least, that Ormonde, Bristol, Hyde, Nicholas and O'Neill were all agreed in trying to end the scandal, and even the King after a while made some faint attempts at propriety.

When Charles was but nineteen he had become attached to a lovely Welsh woman, at that time the mistress of Henry Sidney, and Lucy Walters, or Mrs. Barlow as she came to be called, remained in the King's company for some years. But in 1656, her boy Jemmy, whom she insisted was the King's son, was seven years old, and every one in the King's circle began to urge that the child should have some education, and that his future ought not to be ruined by his mother "making a property of him to support herself in the wild and disgraceful course of life she hath taken."² The King had now given her up, and her life at Brussels was one of open vice.

Neither Bristol, Ormonde, nor O'Neill were straitlaced, and they had never meddled with Mrs. Barlow's concerns till she began to make herself publicly notorious, for, as O'Neill wrote, "every idle action of hers brings your Majesty upon the stage."

The scandal was temporarily smothered by money, and Ormonde and Hyde got her shipped off to England with an annuity for her support there. But she was not long content in Puritan England, and Cromwell contemptuously wrote a pass for her with his own hand, directing that Charles Stuart's "lady of pleasure

¹ Cal. Cl. S.P., III. 307.

² Cl. S.P., III. 394.

and his young heir" should be sent away and put on shore in Flanders. The secretary to the Spanish Government at Brussels, Egidio Mottet, who owed his position to Charles's influence, did his best to support the English gentlemen in persuading Mrs. Barlow to part with the boy, but she threatened, if coerced, to blackmail the King and post up his letters publicly. Then things went from bad to worse. A maid died in her house under suspicious circumstances, and one of Mrs. Barlow's discarded lovers, Tom Howard, was stabbed by her manservant in the open street.

It was probably in answer to some joke made by Hyde on this performance that Bristol wrote from the Spanish army on the 2nd of September: "You may be merry concerning Mrs. Barlow, but I am sure I cannot be so enough to answer your levities."¹

No other allusion among Bristol's letters explains whether he had a soft corner in his heart for a lovely face or whether he was too much disgusted by the Barlow affairs to make a jest of them.

As Tom Howard was afterwards found to have sold the King's secrets to Cromwell, it is probable that Hyde already had suspicions of him, and naturally was not very sympathetic over the rascal's narrow escape from death, although he had written quite seriously on the 27th of August that "Justice would be severely prosecuted against mistress and man."

Then Slingsby, Bristol's secretary, who had lately married, tried to get Mrs. Barlow and her children to lodge in his house, so that she might be under some sort of control, but she refused to have anything to say to him, and at last tried to escape from the country, carrying little Jemmy with her. That drove Slingsby to his wits' end, and in December he hit on the extreme step of having her arrested for debt and locked up in the common prison. The chivalrous people of Brussels were so shocked by this performance that a riot was raised, Mrs. Barlow was rescued, and allowed to take refuge in Lord Castlehaven's house. Not only the mob but the Spanish authorities were greatly disturbed, and Mottet wrote in horror of the whole proceeding.

Charles was naturally greatly vexed, he had wished to get the boy away quietly, but had given no orders to Slingsby which authorised such a public attack. Ormonde wrote on the 10th of December, 1657, repeating that the King had only wished to

¹ Cl. MSS., 101.

get the boy in a quiet and silent way, "as it would be a charity to separate him from his mother, unless she redeem the reproach of her past ways."

Slingsby himself wrote to the King on the 22nd of December, assuring him that the Spaniards now had found out the truth about Mrs. Barlow, and were "infinitely out of countenance" at having interfered on her behalf, and no doubt if the King would write to Don Alonzo de Cardenas, he would have her papers examined and given up to him, as he had "sufficiently found out her qualities, but the Spaniards do not love to admit they had made a mistake."

Eventually Jemmy was given up and sent to Paris, where he was educated, not very well, under the care of Henrietta Maria, and finally grew up to be the handsome and ill-fated Duke of Monmouth.

It has been suggested¹ that Bristol's remark to Hyde about Mrs. Barlow was a protest against this attempt by Slingsby, but as it was written two months earlier, it can hardly have reference to it.

It has also been said that Mary of Orange in writing to Charles called Mrs. Barlow "your wife." There is absolutely no evidence that Mary's letter referred to Lucy Barlow, and it would have been unprecedented for a mistress to be given such a title. The fashions of choosing valentines and of drawing lots for partners on Twelfth Night made fancy relationships very common. The old Earl of Cork wrote of a present sent to a little girl whom he calls "his vocal wife," and the great Admiral Levison in writing to his friend Mr. Fitton sends affectionate messages to Mrs. Fitton, calling her his own wife!²

If the partisans of Lucy Barlow had ever been able to produce any genuine proof of the boy's legitimacy, there would have been no doubt about King Monmouth becoming King of England. It is curious to speculate what then would have been the fate of King and Kingdom.

One of the most enigmatic of the exiles from England was Bristol's kinsman, Sir Kenelm Digby, who flashed from place to place like a will-o'-the-wisp, nominally collecting money for

¹ *Memoirs of the Court of England*, d'Aulnoy. Ed. Gilbert.

² See also *A Jacobean Letter-writer*, Statham, p. 289: "I go to Knebworth about a match for my wife with young Gifford."

Gossip

the royal cause, but suspected of intriguing with Cromwell and being ready to throw over all his loyalty if he could make good terms for the English Catholics. So early as 1649 Byron complained to Ormonde that Sir Kenelm was employing a former secretary of Digby's, Walsingham, "whom your Excellency knows for a pragmatistical knave."

In one of his flights Sir Kenelm seems to have abandoned the son who had helped to separate Digby and Wilmot in the Caen duel. This poor George Digby wrote to Hyde in September 1659,¹ apologising for the liberty to which he was driven by his worse than ill condition; he had been left by his father without money or instructions, and so came begging a loan of ten pounds from Hyde, who had ado enough to keep himself and his King from starving.

¹ Cl. MSS., VI. 336.

CASTLES IN SPAIN

ONE ROYALIST PLOT after another had fired the hopes of the exiles and then flickered out into nothingness ; but when the great Protector breathed his last, it seemed impossible that England should not unanimously rise and demand the recall of its King. Yet 1658 ended with no restoration. Cromwell's eldest son succeeded his father as automatically as though he were the heir of a royal line. The Amsterdam people might dance for joy that "The great Devil is dead," but in England, Thurloe wrote, "Not a dog wagged his tongue." But when in the April days of 1659 "Tumbledown Dick" ceased to reign, the hopes of the exiles were once more bound to bud and blossom like the orchards in their long abandoned homes. Sir George Booth in Cheshire and the leading gentry in every county either sprang to arms, or held themselves in readiness to join the King when he should appear, and Charles was anxious to be at a seaport ready to start for England at the first favourable moment.

Even Hyde agreed that some move might now be made, although Culpepper with his usual cynicism urged a waiting game. "When their partialities shall come to the height, that is, when the swords shall be drawn, our tale will be heard. The weaker party will be glad to take us by the hand, and then will be the time to speak our own language."¹

In this spring of 1659 France and Spain were beginning to consider the possibility of ending the war that had dragged on between them for thirty years. The conference was to be held at that classic ground for treaties, the Isle of Pheasants. There the Spanish King's favourite, Don Luis de Haro, could hold court at Fuentarabia, on the Spanish shore of the Bidassoa, and the French Cardinal at St. Jean de Luz on the French side, and the

¹ Cal. Cl. S.P., 412.

Castles in Spain

two could meet on the island midway between the two kingdoms, there to debate on the marriage of the young King of France to a Spanish Princess.

Neither France nor Spain took the slightest interest in the fate of the exiled Charles, nor had the faintest intention of quarrelling with the established Government in England; yet both felt if some chance should upset that Government and restore the King, it might be well to have deserved his gratitude. Spain was anxious to regain both Jamaica and Dunkirk, but she determined not to involve herself till she was sure she would be paid for her trouble.

France had less to gain, and Charles actually tried to buy the Cardinal's help by offering his hand to the Cardinal's niece. But at present neither great Power chose to move; like some modern statesmen they decided to "wait and see."

Charles began to get ready by applying for a passport to France, ostensibly to visit his mother in Paris; but when the news came that Booth was in arms and all the best known gentlemen in England headed by Massie, the admired "William the Conqueror," were rising, there was no time to lose, and Charles risked entering France without a passport.

He left Brussels early in the morning of August 11th with the greatest secrecy and almost unattended. Only Ormonde went with the King; to avoid notice the rest of his travelling companions left Brussels by another road and joined him later on.

Bristol, of course, was one of them, though he had only just recovered from a bad fall from his horse; but such a splendid adventure would have brought him from the gates of the grave, and he was necessary to the party, as he knew the country well on both sides of the frontier. O'Neill, of course, was also of the party, and Count de Marchine, one of Condé's followers who had been given the Garter two years earlier when Bristol and Newcastle acted as his supporters. Hyde and Nicholas were left to represent the King in Brussels and to cover his absence. It was indeed only too easy for Hyde to profess ignorance of His Majesty's movements, for the travellers very seldom vouchsafed to tell him where they were. He wrote: "What way he will go, nobody knows"; but hope triumphed over his fears and he declared: "If the King hath met with no inhibition he is by this time in England."

The Duke of York was away on a visit to the Princess of Orange, but dashed back when he heard what was afoot, and to his dismay reached his brother's lodging only to find the King gone. He called a coach and drove in all haste to Hyde's, where he found Culpepper, Langdale, and his friend Berkeley, and heard that the King had left word that he was to follow to Calais. At Calais it might be that Admiral Montague and the Fleet were awaiting their young Admiral, so James hastily disguised himself and, taking only Berkeley and a trumpeter, travelled night and day and caught up with Charles near St. Omers.

Charles was naturally in the greatest anxiety for news from England, and decided it would be best to separate so as not to miss any couriers—York going to Boulogne, while he himself continued his route to Calais. However, when he arrived there he decided to go on by Rouen to Dieppe, and for a while he vanished from the eyes of his anxious followers.

Bristol wrote to Hyde¹ that they had been so lucky as to intercept letters from the Parliamentary envoy, Lockart to Mazarin, which proved the Cardinal "to be false and unworthy beyond all description." In truth Mazarin took no interest in Charles's affairs and was weary of the constant demands of the Queen and her friends Jermyn and Montague. He snubbed Jermyn sharply when once he ventured to assume that the Cardinal proposed to take up the cause of the exiled King. But the pressure never ceased till driven to exasperation Mazarin wrote:² "*Je scay qu'il y a un roy d'Angleterre hors de ses royaumes. Je scay tous les malheurs qui sont arrivés a sa maison. Je scay toutes les raisons que le dit roy et ses serviteurs peuvent dire pour obliger les autres roys d'embrasser sa cause. Je scay l'état pressant des affaires de ce royaume là et la constitution de toutes les autres de l'Europe. Ainsy il est superflu de me rien dire sur cette nature.*" In fact, Mazarin's business was to govern France and come to terms with Spain, not to act the good Samaritan to wandering royalties.

No refusals, however, could end Henrietta Maria's importunity nor shake her belief in her own talents for negotiating; even when Mazarin warned Montague that her secrets were told by all her household, she went on in self-satisfied obstinacy. She actually proved too much for Ormonde's patience. That dignified and courteous gentleman lost his temper and his manners when the

¹ Cl. MSS., 63, 240.

² Maz. Letters, IX. 319.

Castles in Spain

Queen complained that, if she had only been trusted, the King would by now be in England. Ormonde could not resist the retort : " If she had never been trusted, the King would never have been out of England." This was not exactly " observing decorum " which he had promised to do, and even Hyde gently suggested Ormonde had not been a very good courtier, and that the Queen's past mistakes were over and should be forgotten. But Hyde was safe out of the way in Brussels, while Ormonde had to meet the unreasonable lady face to face, which was another story.

Charles did not ask much from France. A thousand foot and five hundred horse would give the impression that he had French backing, and joined to his own regiments would make a very fair demonstration, and Turenne was eager to help his favourite James of York. Jermyn promised Ormonde that he would procure a 36-gun French ship to carry the King to England, but Ormonde wrote to Hyde : ¹ " You know how flat such projects grow in that climate in a little time," and put so little faith in the promise that he sent word to Bennet who was watching the course of events at San Sebastian to secure the needed ship there.

Meantime Hyde, tied down at Brussels, was growing wild with anxiety for news, but when on August 28th Bristol favoured him with a cyphered letter, writing by the desire of the King and Ormonde, Hyde seems to have already heard from Ormonde, for he did not take the trouble to decipher more than half of Bristol's letter.² They had arranged, Bristol says, that news should meet them at each of their stopping places, and that Brest would be the most suitable place for the King's embarkation. Charles, with his usual love of yachting, had already provided himself with a little frigate or galliot, but where they should land in England must depend on which port their friends secured. If they were so unhappy as to get news of the failure of the rising, it would not be difficult for Charles then to go on to San Sebastian. Bristol explains it will not be possible at such a distance to keep Hyde informed about everything, but he must content himself (when did Hyde ever content himself ?) that the King had looked round every way before making up his mind that he must without delay run the hazard of joining Booth, " by the aptest way of

¹ Carte, II. 196, 188.

² Cl. MSS., 63, 240.

Charles Starting for England

embarkation he can find in the parts of Lower Brittany," and they were to meet Ormonde at St. Malo. At present, he continued, he was, by the King's orders, writing to Condé, to Caracina, and de Marchine, to beg that even a few men might be sent to support them.

Hyde's anxieties were not at all allayed by these wild schemes of landing in a "little galliot" anywhere on the coast of England from Sole Bay in Suffolk to the Wyrall Peninsula near Liverpool. He wrote dispiritedly : " If I had not great reverence for your councillors and believed you have many other reasons for the conclusions you have made than you have expressed, I should be very melancholy." He can only trust " God Almighty will bless the King, and that some good accident will prevent his executing any resolution that may be inconvenient to him."

Charles naturally was enchanted at escaping from his dreary abode in Flanders, and with well-founded hopes of a glorious Restoration he was in such high spirits that a Scot would have feared he was " fey." His enjoyment was a good deal increased by the opportunity of tormenting the fussy old Chancellor, and he and Bristol must have chuckled together over the letter that His Majesty sent to Hyde with Bristol's despatch of August 28th.

THE KING TO HYDE :

August 28th, '59.

Upon the whole matter I am very cheerful, and though I am not altogether so plump, I begin to grow as sanguine as Mr. Skinner himself. You will see by the enclosed the leisure one of our company hath had. I promised him to send it to you that you might see how diligent he is of laying hold on all occasions for the public good. You will guess by this we are in reasonable good humour. Sure never people went so cheerfully to venture our necks as we do.

ENCLOSED.

A la fille du Tourneur et Ivoire à Dieppe.

La mignone estalant ses bijoux
Faicts des Dents des bestes Indienes,
Par un petit ris charmant et doux
Decourist la merveille des sienns
Et acquistà son Père la gloire
De travailler le mieux en Ivoire.

¹ Cl. MSS., 63, 315.

² Cl. MSS., 63, 237.

Castles in Spain

Hyde was not to be drawn, but answered the King with resignation.

September 6th.¹

I cannot express to you the joy that possessed me upon receiving yours of the 28th, but I cannot tell you that it continued to the same height after I had read what the Poet writ in cypher, which hath put a thousand thoughts and apprehensions into me, tho' you know I do always find much ease for myself by believing that honest men upon the place see most, and can judge best what is to be done, but I chiefly depend upon one who I hope takes more care of you than you do of yourself. I have writ to your Ivory Poet. . . . The Duke of Gloster had been dissuaded from making a journey into Holland and told me yesterday his sister . . . would come to Antwerp to enjoy his company.

Meantime the invaluable Ormonde had been sent back to Paris in all haste to explain matters to Henrietta Maria, and "to observe decorum" by apologising to the Cardinal for the party's passing through France without passports. And while Charles was waiting for Ormonde came the news that shattered his hopes. Booth was defeated and imprisoned, and his adherents had melted away before General Lambert like snow in sunshine : at one blow all was ended. If Ormonde had not been delayed, Charles would have already started. Hyde in his history says the news reached the King at Rochelle, but he was then writing from memory ; the letters in his own collection show that the King was at St. Malo, and heard of the disaster just in time to prevent his sailing. Hyde's prayers for a good accident to prevent the King from executing an inconvenient resolution had been answered.

Charles at once decided that his only chance now was to hurry to the Conference at San Sebastian, although Bennet who was on the spot was not at all sure of the wisdom of his presence, and wrote, "If he come hither, he serves Spain and displeases France." But Charles was clear, as he wrote to his follower Mordaunt on the 28th of June, that if he did not himself go to the meeting between the Cardinal and De Haro he would never know what they were willing to do ; if a move could be made at that time by his friends in England it would much strengthen his hands. Now that these friends had made the move and failed it was all the more important to persuade some great Power to back his

¹ Cl. MSS., 64, 83.

The King Missing

cause. So the King decided to go on to Nantes and try to find a ship, and, as report said the French Court was at Bordeaux, O'Neill was sent on to spy out the land, for it would have been inconvenient for the King to come on them, and more than inconvenient for Bristol, who had been formally exiled from France and would be in great danger if discovered.

O'Neill reported there were no dangers ahead, and the only difficulty would be getting horses, a rather serious difficulty one would imagine! They saw it was final, and so went on to Rochelle to try to go by sea; but after waiting there for a week, the wind continued so contrary that they gave up in despair and returned to the plan of going by land, dividing the party so as to travel unobserved.¹ Ormonde was to travel alone and O'Neill to follow a little later.

At the Spanish headquarters Bennet was tearing his hair at their non-appearance, but they managed to pacify him with a message telling him he might very soon expect them at San Sebastian, whence, if the conference really proved to be over, the King might go on to Madrid to plead his own cause. And in the meantime the King decided to disappear, a plan that was both prudent and entertaining, but which reduced most of his servants to despair: Culpepper, who had gone to Paris to await developments, and poor Bennet fencing with the inquiries of the Spaniards at Fuentarabia, were both distracted, and Hyde, who heard several reports that the King was ill, lost all self-control in his anxiety and scolded his friends roundly.

No news was received from any of the party till on October 12th Ormonde wrote of his own arrival at Toulouse.

The records that survive are so contradictory, and the loss of another letter of Ormonde's, giving details of the journey, is so serious that it cannot be made clear whether the King ever got to Toulouse itself at all. Ormonde wrote: "He went hence on the 7th"; but that may have only been from the neighbourhood.

By the 13th of September Hyde ventured to assume that the King must be in Spain, when Bennet replied that he had not yet arrived, and that Don Luis, who had bought furniture for his reception, was growing annoyed at the delay.

On the 10th of October Bennet was relieved to hear the King

¹ Cl. MSS., 64, 215.

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was as far as Bordeaux. Charles had managed to travel so secretly that the Spaniards believed he had already arrived and was in hiding at St. Jean de Luz, while the French believed he was concealed at Fuentarabia, and the Cardinal nearly fainted from vexation.

Hyde revenged himself long after for his anxieties by explaining that the King had not made the journey from policy, but that he had determined "to give himself all the pleasure and divertisement that such a journey would admit of. To that purpose he appointed the Earl of Bristol to be his guide, who knew most of France, or at least more than anyone else did, and Daniel O'Neill to take care that they always fared well in their lodgings, for which no man was fitter. Thus they wheeled about by Lyons into Languedoc, and were so well pleased with the varieties in their journey that they not enough remembered the end of it, taking their information of the progress of the treaty from the intelligence they met with in the way. . . ." When they came near Toulouse they heard the Court was there, so "the King, going himself a nearer way, sent the Marquis of Ormonde thither to inform himself of the true state of the treaty and to meet His Majesty again at a place appointed, that was the direct way to Fuentarabia."¹

Culpepper writes to Nicholas that Ormonde was "to excuse the King's passing through France incognito, with other instructions to the Cardinal, to soften and incline him to be a friend to the King's business; and to that purpose Lord Jermyn was sent by the King to meet him from the Queen at Toulouse. . . . None of us here have ever heard one word from either of them since that time, and why they continue at Toulouse, the Cardinal being at St. Jean de Luz we cannot imagine."²

In a letter from Toulouse to Nicholas, Ormonde says his master when he went hence "on the 7th of October was in perfect health, and had never been indisposed during the whole journey save once when he had eaten too much fruit, but that he would not admit! We wanderers," he goes on, "have the divertisement of seeing new places to refresh the melancholy of our spirits, and we are not subject to the complaints and sight of our friends in misery, but when we come to gather all you have writ, we shall have it all at once with the greater weight."³

¹ Cal. S.P. Dom., 1659-60, p. 255.

² Eg. MSS., 2536, 437.

³ Eg. MSS., 2536, 456.

The King on a Holiday

No doubt the failure of Booth's rising was a bitter disappointment, and what made it worse was the report that all the principal actors had been executed, but this dispirited tone is so unlike Ormonde that Nicholas attributed his melancholy partly to solitude, while Hyde (October 12th) unfeelingly retorted that if he had left direction where letters were to be sent he would at least have had the satisfaction of hearing from his friends. Ormonde seems to have remained at Toulouse, at least from October 7th to the 16th, possibly hoping the Cardinal might yet arrive, and then decided to make for Fuentarabia, where he found to his dismay that nothing was known of the King.¹ He wrote, however, to Hyde to send the King's servant, Toby Rustat, after them with necessaries of which he enclosed a list. On the 10th of October this was done, Hyde remarking : ² "It is very strange that neither the King nor you should in your instructions make the least mention of linen, which I take to be a commodity you are most in need of, and can be the least supplied with there, and therefore Mr. Secretary and I, finding Toby to concur with us, advised him to take that provision with him."

It may seem strange that O'Neill, who had reached Bordeaux while the French Court were staying there, should have believed that the Conference at the Isle of Pheasants was over. But he was not in a position to make inquiries at headquarters, for he told Hyde he was afraid to visit his acquaintances at Court for fear of raising suspicions. But if he had been able to make inquiries he would have gained nothing, for the Queen-mother and the royal bridegroom, strange to say, were equally ignorant, and after having held high revels at Bordeaux they assumed that the Conference was ended and moved on to Toulouse.

Meanwhile Charles with his two cheerful companions was enjoying himself in a simpler fashion, and slipping over the Pyrenees like an ordinary tourist. As the French Court was misinformed, it is not much wonder that Charles, hearing the same reports at every place that he halted at, had easily fallen in with Bristol's proposal that as the Conference was over they should get into Spain by the shortest route and so on to Madrid to plead his own cause to the Spanish King himself. Apparently they crossed the Pyrenees by the Val d'Aran, after travelling along the Garonne to St. Gaudens ; unless indeed they went straight from Grénade

¹ Cl. MSS., XVI. 66.

² Cl. S.P., III. 581.

Castles in Spain

to Muret.¹ Culpepper sent Hyde an account of the journey which he must have got from O'Neill, telling that when O'Neill had joined Charles at Bordeaux and got the false news of the Conference they "steered through Longuedoc to the farthest part of Navarre, and then, by Bristol's advice, continued in the way of Madrid until they came to Saragoca."²

All blame for these wanderings was of course laid on Bristol. Culpepper told Nicholas "Lord Bristol's opinion grounded upon the uncertainty of reports and the greater uncertainty how long the Conference would continue if it were not then ended prevailed (so O'Neill saith)."³

From Saragossa Charles as usual wrote most cheerfully to his distracted Chancellor: ⁴ "Our journey hitherto hath been very lucky, having met with many pleasant accidents and not one ill one to any of our company, hardly so much as the fall of a horse, but I am very much deceived in the travelling in Spain, for by all reports I did expect ill-cheer and worse lying, and hitherto we have found both the beds and especially the meat very good. The only thing I find troublesome is the dust and particularly in this town, there having fallen no rain on this side the Pyrenees these four months. God keep you and send you as good mutton as we have at every meal." So our "mutton-eating King" had already formed the taste which was to revolutionise English menus.

But on the very day that he wrote so cheerfully he heard that they had been misled by the reports and the Conference was still sitting. He wrote to Hyde a few hours later in a very different strain, telling him that all had fallen out more unluckily than could have been imagined. He regrets the time they had lost at Rochelle waiting for a wind, but assures Hyde he will now lose as little time as possible and was sending O'Neill forward to announce his coming to Don Luis.⁵

Meantime Bennet, who had been doing his best to keep a place for Charles at the Conference, was writing distracted letters to Hyde, who certainly was not to blame for the luckless envoy's being left without information or instruction. On October 6th,⁶ he writes that "Don Luis hath all the reason in the world to

¹ D. K. Broster.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Eg. MSS., 2536, 437.

⁵ Cl. MSS., 65, 135.

⁶ Cl. MSS., 65, 39.

complain that after he have expressed to me a desire to see and serve the King here, and caused to be brought hither for his reception furniture of beds and plate and declaring he would leave his own quarters to him, he hath not in two months had so much as a letter from him." "I swear to you my heart is ready to burst with vexation."

What made Charles's delay more distracting to Bennet was that the envoy of the English Parliament, Lockart, was already on the spot, armed with full authority to treat in the name of England, and skilful in taking advantage of every turn of events, while Bennet could only look on helpless and discredited. Even his letters of lamentation were not safe, for Lockart got counterfeit seals made bearing the arms of Jermyn, Hyde and the rest, so that his agents could open all Bennet's correspondence and seal it up again.

Yet Bennet was convinced if only the King would appear all might yet go well; the Cardinal had spoken favourably of His Majesty and Don Luis was all that was friendly, and indeed, had received Bennet with the distinction of an ambassador, and had invited him to dinner, where he drank the health of the King of England. He also encouraged Bennet to try to get an interview with Mazarin, and so the English envoy drove over to St. Jean de Luz and halted at the Cardinal's lodgings, only to be told by the Captain of the Guard that the Cardinal could not receive him without permission from the King of France! The Cardinal, however, sent a message as Bennet was leaving "desiring me not to be troubled with his refusal since he made it with good consideration for the King my master, and that within two days it should be manifest to me. With this secret satisfaction I am returned, and outward discredit which will certainly give Lockart no small joy."¹

Lockart certainly did enjoy this apparent rebuff, writing to England that Bennet had gone confidently upstairs at the Cardinal's "fancying perchance that when he had once got in, the Cardinal in civility would admit his visit, and how the guard had met him on the stairs and turned him back, reconducting him to his coach, so that he and his people had to go and get their dinner at an Ordinary and then drive back to the Spanish quarters to lament the hard usage they had received."²

¹ Cl. MSS., 63, 122.

² Cl. S.P., III. 540.

Castles in Spain

But Lockart's satisfaction must have been a good deal dashed when he found that he himself had just as much difficulty in getting an audience with the Spaniards as Bennet had with France ; and at the last, he was only given a private audience, instead of being received as a formal ambassador at the Isle of Pheasants.

When Lockart at last was received by Don Luis, although the Spaniard made himself extremely charming, it was well known that he had talked the whole business over with Bennet the previous evening, and after the interview was over, Don Luis told Bennet that all that Lockart wished was that the war between France and Spain should continue !

At last, on the 13th of October, poor Bennet sent Colonel Dongan off to scout on the road to Bayonne, hoping that he might at least come on Ormonde, and carrying with him all the letters that had been lying waiting for the Marquis.¹

But by that time affairs had advanced so far that the royal wedding was agreed on, and Don Luis was preparing to start for Madrid to arrange about acting as proxy for the King of France at the ceremony.

Culpepper was now at Bordeaux hoping soon to meet the King at either San Sebastian or Fuentarabia, but when he arrived on the 18th, Charles was still missing. Culpepper wrote to Hyde, suggesting that "some whimsey" might have sent the royal party wandering through Navarre, but O'Neill had "talked confusedly" of their going somewhere by sea !

Poor Culpepper ends : "I am so much amazed at the whole business that I know not well whether I sleep or wake. All things here are most desperate merely for want of the King's presence."² However, the darkest hour comes before the dawn, and on the 23rd Bennet joyfully announced that O'Neill had arrived carrying letters from the King to Don Luis, written from Saragossa in Biscay.³

Culpepper also wrote to Nicholas on October 22nd,⁴ saying he himself was starting to meet the King "seven leagues hence." O'Neill had been told by Don Luis that the King of Spain had commanded that Charles should be received "as himself," and Colonel Dongan was dispatched to tell the King this and also

¹ Cl. MSS., 65, 110.

² Cl. MSS., 65, 203.

³ Cl. MSS., 65, 173.

⁴ Eg. MSS., 2536, 457.

The King Arrives in State

that the Conference was not like to end before the end of the month, at soonest.

O'Neill himself wrote that after being extremely well received by Don Luis, he had gone back to meet the King, who arrived on a wet and stormy evening, riding alone in dignity in the coach Don Luis had sent to meet him, and treated and served as though he were at home. Bristol and Ormonde were offered places with the King, but considered it right he should appear alone. He wrote again that all the great persons about the Cardinal "make great compliments to his Majesty," but that signifies little, "for the Cardinal himself refused to see the King."¹

Although Ormonde had already arrived he had not been able to do any business, as the Cardinal declined to receive him, it was not known exactly why; when Charles at last arrived Don Luis told him that he did not trust Mazarin, but Culpepper with his usual cynicism suspected that the Cardinal's refusal had been agreed upon between himself and Don Luis. Culpepper ended his letter: "Bristol his discourse is not fit for a letter, and more than to make you merry, is of no use."² "We carry our fate with us, wheresoever we go," he wrote in another letter. "We all of us, except one, being as beggars here as we were at Brussels. I in particular being in one old threadbare suit, for want of money to make me a new Spanish one, which makes me seldom appear at Court."

As it was made clear that the King was not to be allowed an interview with the cautious Cardinal, it was decided that Ormonde should meet him, apparently by accident, riding on the road to the Isle of Pheasants.

Don Luis loitered on the way, to give Ormonde more time with the Cardinal. But Ormonde did not gain much by his move. His Eminence only vouchsafed curt speeches and the assurance that France could do nothing till after the royal wedding.

Carte says that Ormonde expected nothing better, "being already only too well acquainted with the pusillanimity and insincerity of the Cardinal, who they soon realised would not grant the smallest assistance to the Restoration, that being a blessing which God had reserved to Himself, and was soon after effected by His Majesty's own subjects without any obligation to

¹ Cl. MSS., 66, 615.

² Cl. MSS., 65, 263.

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foreigners." ¹ Ormonde himself, however, did not take quite such a melancholy view as Carte reports; writing to Lord Mordaunt, he says the Cardinal had received him "with that affability and civility which is natural to him and due to my master." Ormonde continues that he was satisfied that considerable succours might be expected, but that their friends must remember to be wary in their preparations. ²

Hyde, who had been on thorns till Charles reached Fuentarabia, now grew equally anxious for him to leave, writing feverishly that the King had now seen enough of new places, and that as he was so well pleased with Spain it would "be a great pity you should go farther into it and like it less." ³ On the 14th of October, O'Neill wrote ⁴ "that the Cardinal had moved to Dax, seventeen leagues from Bayonne, where he will stay some time to bathe his feet in hot mud that is there." The King, undaunted by failure, decided to follow the Cardinal, intending to meet Jermyn there and then take post to Paris. But the Cardinal was not to be caught. He left Dax suddenly, and Charles had to go on to Bordeaux unsatisfied, with, however, the one success to score, that Jermyn had managed to see His Eminence.

Henrietta Maria met the King at Colombe and was delighted to see him, "and the pretty princess his sister, no less. Her Highness was so grown the King did not know her, for they brought His Majesty another young lady whom he saluted for his sister, and was in the mistake till my Lord Gerard undeceived him." ⁵ The pretty Princess, afterwards the charming Henrietta of Orleans, continued to be the one creature in the world whom Charles loved heartily.

There was one distinct gain from Charles's visit to Fuentarabia. He won golden opinions from all who had met him and quite dispelled the unfavourable opinion the Spaniards had formed from the gossip of Brussels. O'Neill wrote: "He has behaved himself here as if he had been bred more years in Spain than in France," and Hyde rejoiced in hearing of his "dexterity and composedness." In truth, Charles could behave like a gentleman when he was treated like a gentleman, and more especially when it was worth his while to do so.

¹ Carte, III. 697.

² Carte, *Orig. Letters*, II. 202.

³ Carte MSS., 213.

⁴ Cl. MSS., 66, 147.

⁵ Armourer to Hyde. Cl. MSS., 67, 27.

Bristol Goes to Spain

Don Luis presented him with 7,000 gold pieces and gave orders that he should have better accommodation in Brussels. Hyde tells us : ¹ "The pleasure and variety of his journey and the very civil treatment he had received from Don Luis and the good disposition he had left the Queen his mother in, had very much revived and refreshed the King's spirit, and the joy for his return dispersed the present clouds. But he had not been long in Brussels before he perceived the same melancholy and despair in the countenances of most men whom he had left there." Upon this "melancholy conjunction," as we have seen, some of the King's servants "began to urge the advantage to be reaped from a changed religion. The best the King could now look for seemed to be a permission to remain in Flanders with a narrow assignation for his bread, which was a melancholy condition for a King, nor could that be depended on."

But one of Charles's followers had no mind to return to genteel starvation in Flanders. Bristol had as usual succeeded in fascinating the most important person on the stage, and Don Luis invited him to return with him to Madrid, which he did under the pretext of going as Ambassador Extraordinary to condole with the King on the death of a young prince.²

Bristol himself wrote to Condé ³ that although Mazarin "s'est relasché un peu en sa fierté pour ce que regarde le roy mon seigneur," he still cherished such an enmity to the writer that he thought for the King's sake he ought not to "présenter un visage si désagréable au ministre," but proposed to leave the King and to go on to Madrid and then to Rome, returning to Flanders by Italy.

Carte ⁴ imagines that Bristol went in order to convince the Court of his catholicity, for he spent a great deal of time in his devotions, but he also thinks Bristol may have hoped to obtain some better revenue to maintain the King in Flanders.

But it is to be feared there must have been further reasons for the disbanding of the happy party of travellers.

It would seem obvious that Bristol, who knew the country and spoke both French and Spanish with fluency, had been a suitable man to accompany Charles on his journey, yet no sooner had they parted company than all the world joined in explaining what a mistake Bristol's coming had been and how much the

¹ *Gr. Reb.*, III. 1045.

³ Carte, *Orig. Letters*, II. 261.

² Carte MSS., 130, 217.

⁴ Carte, *Ormonde*, III. 689.

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King disliked him, and that it was only Bristol's "irresistible importunity" which prevailed to make the King accept his company.¹

O'Neill, who had always been Bristol's intimate friend, and who had owed his position at the Court in England to Bristol's efforts, now completely turned round and wrote that Bristol had failed to overcome the prejudices of the Spaniards against him. "Lord Bristol makes no advantages though he believes contrary." This really reads like spite, for O'Neill cannot have been ignorant of the unusual civility shown by Don Luis to Bristol; and then O'Neill goes on to speak slightly of Bristol's chances in Madrid, telling Hyde that Bristol's hopes "he owes rather to his happy constitution than his reason."

Again O'Neill writes on the 23rd in a tone that can only be explained by jealousy.² He says: "My Lord Bristol is gone to Madrid very much unsatisfied with all he parted with. I doubt he will not be made better there, though he never was unfortunate, as he says, when he was out of the King's business. Don Luis gave him 300 pistoles to make his coming (*sic*) and it's possible it was rather given to separate him from His Majesty, and to hinder his going to Rome. I found though Don Luis used him very civilly he had no mind he should meddle in business, yet our good friend is, I fear, in a belief he will be the mediator between him and Don Juan, and have as much of the favour of the one as he believed he had of the other."

Some people actually suggested that Bristol had been encouraged to go by the Spanish faction who wished to prevent the King coming to terms with Mazarin¹ and Le Nau, who had once been in Bristol's service and now was in the household of the Cardinal, wrote that Mazarin was much displeased at Bristol's going to Fuentarabia, and Bennet added that he found the Cardinal had given such a character of Bristol to Don Luis that his being there was very prejudicial to the King. If Don Luis had any prejudice against Bristol we have seen he soon got over it.

Hyde, however, kept his own opinions and was above O'Neill's petty spite. He wrote in his history: ³ "In the short time of his stay, the Earl of Bristol according to his excellent talent which seldom failed him in any exigence, from as great a prejudice as could attend any man, had wrought himself so much into the good

¹ Cl., *Life*, p. 84.

² Cl. MSS., 66, 265.

³ *Gr. Reb.*, III. 2044.

The Wane of Friendship

graces of all the Spaniards that Don Luis was willing to take him with him to Madrid, and that he should be received into the services of His Catholic Majesty in such a province as should be worthy of him. So that His Majesty had now a less train to return with, the Marquis of Ormonde, Daniel O'Neill and two or three servants." ¹

But Hyde's letters are much less flattering than his history. Every one that he sent now to Bristol is full of complaints and reproof. The affection that used to sweeten the Chancellor's sourest speeches was now gone, and the forms of familiarity and intimacy gave all the more openings for bitter words.

At last Bristol turned on him and wrote from Madrid what he considered "a sharp vindication" of himself.

He writes that the only letter he had received was one "wherein you let me see very clearly that if the King, through missing the wind at Rochelle had missed the Conference," Bristol must have borne the blame although Ormonde also was there; yet, as it was now found that there would have been great inconvenience in the King's arriving earlier, why might not Bristol have the credit? "But methinks," he goes on, "our master should be well enough known, at least to you, to exempt those who have the honour to accompany and obey him as I had, as well from the blame as the praise of his actions? I answered not your letter sooner as I was loath to expose myself to the usual accusations of my easiness to believe good words, by telling you of Don Luis's great courtesy to me, before I had seen them seconded by the effect." And then he tells of a present of money from Don Luis that would enable him to reach Madrid without taking a farthing of money from the King. And he ends bitterly, "Well however, I am glad to find your applause at what I have done in removing myself from the attendance of His Majesty in France." ²

Bennet on the 22nd writes to Hyde from a "scurvy inn, into which I am come waiting upon my Lord Bristol, in his journey to Madrid," ³ and Hyde admits that when Bristol arrived at Madrid, "the King, upon the memory of his father, who had deserved well from that Crown, or rather had suffered much from not deserving ill, received him graciously." . . . "And there he resided in the Resident's house, who had been his servant,

¹ *Gt. Rrb.*, III. 21, 1044.

² *Cl. S.P.*, III. 606. Kd

³ *Cl. MSS.*, 66, 24.

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in such a repose as was agreeable to his fancy that he might profit his own fortune, which was the only thing his heart was set upon, and of which he despaired in his own country." ¹

From Madrid he wrote to Hyde, half-laughing, and yet wholly hurt at the Chancellor's incessant reproaches.

He begins at once :

January 17, 1660.²

I had like to have said, the Devil take my Lord Chancellor, but I do say it with all my heart, the Devil take his letter of the 30th Dec., which I received just now as I was making up my packets and thinking to burn it after I saw there was nothing of moment in it, instead thereof I burnt a letter of four sides of paper I had newly finished to you. You must therefore be content with a short and sharp one tasting of the humour I am in.

After vindicating himself once again from being answerable for the King's delays and round-about journeys, he ends :

I am now disposing things for my return to Flanders where I shall endeavour to do my part in the way of justice and kindness as much as you say in yours. God keep you. I recommend to your care the enclosed to my Lady Abbess.

To the King Bristol wrote nearly as candidly as Hyde could have done. It was impossible that a man whom the King disliked and distrusted could have written in such a strain.

MADRID,

January 17, 1660.³

I cannot forbear telling your Majesty that your servants here have some reason to complain that since Sir Harry Bennet left you they have not received one word by your Majesty's order from anybody about you, nor any letter from my Lord Lieut. I say not this with much relation to myself, being charged with nothing for your service. But I confess I am much concerned in the mortification as must needs be to your Resident here, not to be able in two months to say to Don Luis one word concerning affairs in England or the motion to your own service, the ministers in this place being made unable to serve or negotiate anything with success if they appear neglected by their master. . . . This much I have thought it my duty to tell you to the end you may be careful to repair the omission. I am now disposing things for my return to Flanders. Don Luis having in the obligingest manner imaginable sent me two days since a thousand pistoles in three perfumed purses,

¹ Cl., *Life*, p. 84.

² Cl. MSS., 120.

³ R.A., 68, IV. v. Cl. MSS., 118.

Lady Bristol's Letters

and that without my having ever alleged to him either services or losses or anything that could look like a pretension. He sent me likewise a letter from the King and another from himself to your Majesty, his own with a flying seal wherein he mentions twice not having heard from you. The conclusion of his letter is what I send you here transcribed.

In February 1660 Bennet tells Ormonde that Bristol had been granted an "audience of leave" to take farewell of the Court, and that Don Luis di Haro had promised anew that he would perform all they had asked of him.

Bristol might complain that the King and Hyde left him without letters. Poor Lady Bristol had much the same grievance, and wrote constantly to Hyde and Ormonde begging for news of her husband. Many of these letters are among the Clarendon MSS. She uses cypher names, speaking of the King as Mrs. Brown and of Bristol as Mrs. Eyres: "I beseech you give me the satisfaction of knowing where Mrs. Eyres is and when you expect her with you."

All that anxious spring of 1660 she sent reports of Mrs. Brown's affairs in England, some good, "which I hope will make you all in as good humour as it doth us," sometimes lamenting how Mrs. Brown had been "near destroyed by those she employs had not God Almighty prevented it." She tells of the wavering of Parliament and the attitude of "the good general," which shows how many hopes were already founded on Monk.

Sometimes she writes to Ormonde, signing herself "yours unalterably, my noble friend," or to "My dear Cousin Hyde," so that evidently she shared in the intimacy which had bound the two to her husband. Often she sent messages through the clever Lady Abbess at Ghent, Mary Knatchbull. In spite of Hyde's sneers about Bristol's "admired Lady Abbess," he seems to have been very glad to get any news she could collect for him, and she writes to him about the needs of her community as to a trusted friend.

Hyde drafted a letter from the King in March 1660, in answer to some of Lady Bristol's petitions, saying the King remembers her husband and will have a care for her own sake and make good all he had promised.

For, the brighter the hopes of a Restoration grew, the more alarmed was Lady Bristol about the future of her family, as she knew her husband had ruined his English prospects by becoming

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a Catholic. She evidently did not suspect the coldness that was growing in Hyde, for she wrote in April urging him not to forget Mrs. Eyres and Mr. Eyres, and again in May she begs that the King could make some place for Mr. Eyres. Bristol himself was very anxious about his position at Court and wrote a pencil letter¹ telling his difficulties. He clearly hesitated about throwing up chances of employment abroad, and returning to England, unless some prospect of a livelihood there was offered.

Lady Bristol was unwearied in begging for the help and interest of his friends, but her very energy alarmed Bristol, who being at such a distance could not be answerable for what she might say or promise without receiving his letters. He therefore wrote to Ormonde enclosing a copy of a letter to Lady Bristol about negotiating for employment. If she were only petitioning in accordance with his directions, there was no more to say or do, but if she were taking some other line Ormonde would do a favour by making his real wishes public "to prevent anything to his prejudice."²

At a time when the most delicate tact and experienced diplomacy was needed, Bristol had an instinctive dread of Lady Bristol's staunch protestantism and hereditary whiggery. If he returned to England, he would return to be himself and go his own way, not be a hanger-on of the Bedford faction.

Meantime, affairs were moving fast in England. While Bristol was riding away from Madrid, Monk's soldiers were riding through the City of London and the Rump Parliament fell. In April Charles issued the Declaration of Breda to his expectant and loyal subjects, a declaration whose statesmanlike and elegant sentences could only have come from the pen of Hyde.

When "Mrs. Eyres" reached Paris, he found the changes in England had produced equivalent changes in the French Court, and the Abbess wrote to Ormonde on the 12th of May telling him that advices from Walter Montague in Paris told that "my Lord Bristol hath been most kindly received by the King, Cardinal and Court."

¹ Carte MSS., CCXIV. 113, 234.

² Carte MSS., CCXIV. 118, 235.

XVI

RESTORATION POLITICS

WHEN THE KING at last came to his own again, Bristol was not one of the gay procession that rode into London on the 29th of May, 1660, and when the Knights of the Garter were installed, Lady Bristol had to get Sir Richard Fanshawe to act as her husband's proxy.¹

In truth, Bristol had been so well received in Paris that he was in no hurry to leave it, and with unusual prudence he waited where he was well off till he could be sure what his prospects might be in the new England, although he was restored to his forfeited honours by Patent.

He wrote in June 1660 to Ormonde, saying he had not heard from him since they parted at Fuentarabia, but that he in no way mistrusted his kindness. But Ormonde was soon to return home as Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, and great as were his worries there he was happily out of the way of the jealousies and intrigues that ravaged the Restoration Court in England. Bristol mentioned when he wrote to Ormonde that he had also written to the Lord Chancellor; he did not yet realise what sort of answer he might expect from the new and mighty Earl of Clarendon. However, he got himself across the Channel in time to sit in the House of Lords and to vote on the Indemnity Bill in July 1660. He was, of course, a few months late in joining in the scramble for place and fortune that was going on among the returning Cavaliers, but he can hardly have doubted that the favourite companion of His Majesty, and comrade of the Lord Chancellor and of the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, would find any difficulty in picking up gold and silver. He did truly need to pick up something, for he returned to England practically penniless, and it is hardly surprising that he hoped he was coming home to a Tom Tiddler's ground. It was natural that Ormonde should have

¹ Ashm. MSS., III. 4, 23.

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become a Marquis, but when Edward Hyde, the son of a small country squire, was Earl of Clarendon and the most powerful man in the kingdom, what might not the Earl of Bristol hope for?

Lady Bristol had petitioned before his return for the lease of the old Palace of Theobalds, saying that the house was so ruined that it was not likely to be used for the King's pleasure. She explained that the estates at Sherborne had been redeemed by her jointure of £30,000 to settle on her eldest son John on his marriage with Alice, daughter and heir of Robert Bourne, of Blackhall, Essex, and Lord Bristol, having lost all in His Majesty's service, could settle nothing upon her in return.

Bristol himself also petitioned for a grant of Ashdown Forest in Kent, but found that Lord Dorset had a claim on it, and agreed to pay him £100 a year rent for it. The King also gave him £10,000 with which he bought Wimbledon House.

His hopes were not really shadowed by the fact that he had become a Roman Catholic, for Clifford was a devout Catholic, and Bennet, who soon came back to share in the Court favours, was as much a Catholic as he was anything. More than all, Bristol knew very well what the King's real opinions were, and if they did not prevent his being King of England, why should the creed which Bristol had the honesty to avow drive him out into the cold? When it became clear that although the King might make him presents and jest with him, no position was offered, no future lay open to his ambition, his surprise and disappointment were overwhelming. No one, least of all Bristol, could blame the indolent and frivolous King who in so many things preferred to be a mere figure-head. No—it was Bristol's oldest and most trusted friend who had thrown him over. Incredible as it might seem, Lord Clarendon would not raise a finger on behalf of the former comrade of Edward Hyde. "To be wroth with one we love doth work like madness in the brain," and if Bristol's friendship turned to violent hatred we can hardly wonder. But his hatred could only spend itself in futile plots against "My Lord Chancellor," while Clarendon's bitterness was enshrined in words that have held up Bristol for the contempt of all succeeding generations as a mere gaudy cockchafer twirling on a pin.

Clarendon begins his strictures by admitting that as Bristol's estates had been settled on his eldest son, he therefore had little

Bristol in the King's Court

to subsist upon but the King's bounty. But far from admiring Bristol's sacrifices Hyde ignores them and goes on, "He was in his nature very covetous and ready to embrace all ways that were offered to get money, whether honourable or no, for he had not a great power over himself and could not bear want which he could hardly avoid, for he was nothing provident in his expenses."

Does not this read like the priggishness of the virtuous apprentice ! Although Hyde had starved with the King he now was wealthy. Therefore it must be Bristol's own fault if he also was not well off.

"Besides his appetite to play and gaming in which he had no skill, and by which he had all his life spent whatever he could get, was not at all abated ; he spent as much money at Wimbledon in building and gardening as the land was worth."

In fact, as it was Bristol's stupidity that had prevented his acquiring wealth, so it was his folly that lost what he did get !

When at last Bristol realised that his old friend had become his new enemy, he set himself with all his power to work the Chancellor's downfall, and till that could be effected he managed to make the Chancellor's life a burden to him.

It was very inconvenient to His Majesty that his indispensable Chancellor and his pleasantest comrade should be at daggers drawn, although nothing that they said made any difference to Charles. The Chancellor might scold, but the King would still confide in Bristol ; and when Bristol criticised the Chancellor, he was told "the King knew the Earl of Clarendon's virtues and defects better than Bristol or Bennet." At last Charles insisted on a reconciliation and brought them together, but such forced reconciliations were not likely to last long. ¹

In January 1661 Mr. Pepys found Lord Bristol walking alone in the King's green-room, while the King was at the Council ; that Council where Bristol had been all powerful in the days of the King's father, and where his quick wit had found resources in the darkest days of this King's exile. Now the door of the Council Chamber was shut in his face.

It was not the way of Bristol to walk long alone in the ante-room, and he quickly faced his position and decided on his policy. The King was delighted to have him at hand, kept no secrets

¹ *Destrades*, August 29, 1661. Barbour, *Arlington*, p. 53.

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from him, and in spite of all the Chancellor could say, encouraged him to meddle in affairs as he chose.¹ He determined, therefore, to pose as the leader of the pro-Spanish party in politics. Spain had been the home of his childhood and the consoler of his exile, the Spanish Ambassador was his intimate friend, and Bennet whom he had trained, was just back from Spain, and almost a Spaniard in formality and dignity. When the French Ambassador left for England, he was warned that he should find both Bristol and Bennet against him, but of the two Bristol was the most easy to circumvent as his courses were open to the day.² Bristol, indeed, was too proudly self-confident to stoop to deceit, it was his fashion to play with his cards on the table and show only too plainly his contempt for his adversaries.

It was on a question between France and Spain that the final breach with the Chancellor was declared.

When the King was safely settled on his throne, all parties felt that the first and most necessary thing to do was to provide him with a wife, and offers poured in from all the Powers of Europe. It was particularly important for Clarendon to be busy about the King's marriage, for the King's heir, the Duke of York, had just married Anne Hyde, the Chancellor's daughter, and for the sake of his own character the Chancellor was bound to make it clear that he was not planning to set his grandchildren on the throne of England. On this important question the friends of France and Spain at once joined issue. Clarendon was disposed to continue Cromwell's choice of a French alliance, and Clarendon's master felt all the fascination of the brilliant Court of his cousin of France. France was indeed then the only really great Power in Europe. Spain, old-fashioned and dilatory, living on tradition and memories, hardly counted. Yet the Englishman in the street had a curious leaning towards a Spanish alliance, partly because he admired the dignity and propriety of Spanish manners, partly because Spain was not particularly dangerous, and finally because she no longer persecuted the religions she did not approve of, though that, as we are reminded by Dr. Gardiner, was because all her heretics were already burnt.

Mazarin had lost no time in offering Charles his niece, Hortense, with an immense dowry, but it had been impossible for Charles to forget that her hand had been refused to him at

¹ Barbour, *Arlington*, p. 50.

² *Ibid.* p. 48.

Fuentarabia, the Cardinal then making the excuse that she was not worthy of such an exalted match. If she were not good enough for a penniless exile, she was hardly a suitable bride for the King of England.

When Mazarin died and King Louis was his own master, he still carried on the anti-Spanish policy of the Cardinal, and not only urged Charles to choose the Portuguese Princess Catherine of Braganza, but actually sent over to offer Clarendon a thousand pounds if he would support the Portuguese candidate. The Chancellor was furious, and complained to the King and the Duke of York of the insult that had been offered him, and only got laughed at by the royal brothers, while the King told him roundly "he was a fool not to have taken it." ¹

It was in the thick of all these intrigues and negotiations that Bristol arrived in England, and Clarendon explains that as he knew or thought he knew all the peoples and languages of all the Courts of Europe, he made sure that he would have an over-mastering influence in the matter. He naturally took the Spanish side with all his energy, and combined the pleasure of opposing the Chancellor with doing a good turn to his old allies. Spain's contribution to the marriage market was a Princess of Parma, beautiful, witty, and highly educated, who would be given the dowry of a Spanish Princess; the Spaniards urging that the Duke of Braganza was no more King of Portugal than Cromwell had been King of England, and that a match with the family of a parvenu was unworthy of a great King.

Clarendon, with his usual acidity, tells that "the King had received Bristol with his usual good countenance, and as his Lordship had excellent talent in spreading that leaf-gold very thin, that it might look more than it was, and took pains, by being always in the King's presence and whispering in his ear and talking upon some subjects with a liberty not ungrateful, to have it believed he was more than ordinarily acceptable to His Majesty." So when Bristol "magnified the Italian ladies, in which arguments he naturally had a very luxurious style, unlimited by any rules of truth or modesty," the Chancellor was alarmed as well as scandalised.

He had at first hoped that as Bristol's "levity and vanity were well known," Charles would pay little attention to him;

¹ Cl., *Life*, p. 93.

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but when it came to Bristol's being shut up for hours in private with the King, and the King began to "look perplexed and full of thought," and took less interest in Portugal, Clarendon grew more and more alarmed. It soon proved he had good grounds for being anxious, for Bristol, in the highest spirits, began to prepare for an expedition to the Continent, and when he started told Clarendon plainly that the Portuguese match was off, and that he was starting for Italy to inspect two ladies, and to begin negotiations with the one he approved.

Clarendon was horrified, for he had already gone very far with his agreement with Portugal; so, as he always did in extremity, he went to Ormonde, and with Ormonde's help he persuaded the King to send Sir Kenelm Digby after Bristol to recall him.

But, says Clarendon,¹ "Bristol continued his journey to Italy, and after his return pretended not to have had that letter till it was too late, in which he had not the good fortune to be believed."

The Chancellor's friends may not have believed it, but Anthony Wood had no doubt. He writes that Bristol was sent by His Majesty to negotiate a match with the Princess of Parma, and had almost brought it to perfection, but Edward, Earl of Clarendon broke the measure, "whereon the Earl of Bristol being thus fooled, he proved a bitter enemy to the Earl of Clarendon."²

It is interesting to speculate what might have been the history of England if a witty and beautiful Princess had become the bride of Charles; high politics are not the only factors in the life of nations and kings; but the Chancellor, whose own marriage had been the result of prudent common sense, never could take anything but a business view of such transactions. With Bristol safely out of the way, the French influence reasserted itself, and the King yielded to it so quickly that even Clarendon began to have qualms and again turned to Ormonde for advice and support. The King had consulted neither of them nor even spoken to them on the subject, but they induced him to meet them and old Lord Southampton in Chiffinch's private rooms, and there Ormonde spoke out straight, warning the King that it was rumoured the Portuguese Princess could never bear a child, and that this was too serious a matter to be decided in a hurry. The King retorted he had gone too far to go back, and then ignoring Bristol and his

¹ *Cl., Life*, p. 88.

² Wood, *Atk.*, III. 1101-2.

The Rivalry of Barbara Palmer

Italian beauty, vowed there was no one else to have, for as for the German Princesses, he swore : " Odsfish, they are all foggy. I cannot like any one of them for a wife." Which made the three Councillors realise sadly that at any rate he did not intend to choose a Protestant.

The truth of the whole situation can never be absolutely known, but it is Clarendon who has always borne the blame for that alliance with France which brought with it the Portuguese match and the sale of Dunkirk to the French. The King personally gained support and money from France, but England only received a final push into the humiliating Dutch war and resented the Chancellor's policy with ever growing exasperation.

Anyhow, Bristol came home to find he had been fooled, whether by King or Chancellor ; the hapless Portuguese Princess Catherine was married by proxy to Bennet and landed in England in May 1662, looking, the King said, " like a bat," to begin a life of humiliation and misery.

At first she held her own on several points and absolutely refused to make any responses when the Archbishop of Canterbury read the English marriage service, and had the rite performed a second time in private according to the Roman Catholic use by the King's kinsman Lord Aubigny.

Clarendon says the poor Queen had beauty and wit enough to have made herself agreeable, but having mixed in no society but that of the convent in which she was educated, she was naturally horrified at the accepted position of Barbara Palmer, the King's favourite mistress, " the Lady," as she was usually called. Poor Catherine may have owned some share of good looks, but Barbara Palmer had the faultless beauty of a Juno ; her perfectly oval face and swan-like neck had a grace and dignity that belied the coarse and grasping soul of the woman, who had the temper of a shrew, the language of a fish-wife, and no morals whatever. But such as she was, she was a power, and only two men ventured to forbid their wives visiting her. Lady Southampton and Lady Clarendon never entered " the Lady's " door, while the stately Duchess of Ormonde was safe across the sea, ruling in decent dignity in Kilkenny, and had no difficulty in the matter.

The King assured his bride with much demonstration of affection that he would never again be guilty of any familiarity with his favourite, but the Queen " had not the temper to

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entertain him with those discourses which the vivacity of her wit could plentifully have suggested to her, but brake out into a torrent of rage."

Clarendon was called in, and scolded both parties soundly and fruitlessly, and the King, thoroughly out of temper, determined to do all the more honour to "the Lady," and created her Countess of Castlemaine.

Bristol, returning with mortification from his fruitless journey to Italy, found a welcome ally in the insulted mistress. He made himself, however, a little too busy in her service, and Clarendon had the pleasure of recording how he over-reached himself.

The King himself told the Chancellor how Bristol had asked "the Lady" whether the Patent creating her Countess of Castlemaine had yet been passed, and she answered "No." He then assured her that he had come to warn her that the Patent had been taken to the Chancellor to be sealed, who had very superciliously said he would first speak to the King about it, and therefore if her ladyship did not make the King very sensible of the Chancellor's insolence, His Majesty would never be master of his own bounty. "The Lady" laughed and made some sharp remarks at Lord Bristol's expense, and then pulled the warrant out of her pocket where it had remained ever since the King had signed it, and said she believed the Chancellor had not yet heard of it! The fact was she had, according to custom, used her title as soon as the warrant was signed, but as she was afraid that her husband, poor creature though he might be, might endeavour to quash this open badge of his wife's disgrace, she had decided to get the warrant sealed in Ireland and not sent to the Lord Chancellor at all. The King made some sharp remarks about Bristol's interference but soon forgot all about it, and the new Countess was content with having had her jest and joined an offensive and defensive alliance with Bristol that never ceased its labours till the Chancellor was ruined.

When the unlucky Queen had at last been broken in to the conditions under which she must live, the Queen-mother came over from Paris bringing with her Mrs. Barlow's Jemmy, now grown into a most beautiful boy. Young as he was, the King, who was devoted to him, arranged a marriage for him with a child heiress, the little Countess of Buccleuch, and then followed the inevitable wrangle between the King and Chancellor. Clarendon

Intrigues with the Catholics

declared the boy might be content to assume the title of his bride, the King was urgent that he should have a title of his own. Lady Castlemaine took up *Jemmy's* cause and Bristol joined her in supporting the King's wishes, so the boy was created Duke of Monmouth, and the King "assigned a liberal maintenance for him, but took not that care for a strict breeding of him as his age required."

Over all these brilliant and corrupt intrigues Bristol flitted gay and witty, while the poor respectable Chancellor, strutting about to pay morning calls with the seals carried before him, could only fret and fume at Charles's choice of an intimate.

But these vulgar intrigues were very far from being Bristol's real interest. Power he was determined to have, but he preferred its being political. It speaks well for his religion or for his pride, that finding he "had backed the wrong horse" in changing his form of creed, he did not attempt to change back, but threw himself with all his energy into organising the English Catholics into a regular party.

It seems probable that Bristol was not merely a party leader. The one thing on which the King had set his heart was to come to some sort of understanding with Rome. In that determination he never wavered, though again and again he had to appear to drop it. One of the first acts of his reign had been to send secretly to Rome to discover whether there were any way in which the Anglican Church might, like the Gallican, keep its independence while acknowledging the Holy See as head of Christendom. The Huguenots in France were indulged or ignored, the same might happen to Nonconformists in England, which would then be behaving in the intelligent and dignified fashion of the great French monarchy, instead of continuing to be an eccentric and schismatic little island, pleasing itself by drawing distinctions when there was no difference.

For this policy Charles required an agent, a tactful and clever "parliamentary hand" who would be devoted to the cause and willing for its sake or the King's sake to be dropped whenever it might be advisable to disown him. Bristol, in his long career, had seen Glamorgan confided in and disavowed; he had himself begged the King to throw him over at the time when James, Duke of York, ran away to Breda,¹ and it would

¹ See p. 171.

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seem that at the Restoration he consented to act as the King's unavowed agent, content to lie, to shift, to bear blame and ridicule, so long as in private he was the King's confidential friend.

This seems the only way to account for the apparently wild *ballons d'essai* which Bristol so frequently sent up and dropped, and also for the suspicious jealousy with which Clarendon regarded him.

In preparation for the debate on Toleration that took place in Charles's First Parliament, Bristol invited all the principal Catholic gentlemen to meet in his house, and after they had taken an oath of secrecy, he told them that now was the time to take measures for the bringing in of their religion, and for that purpose to secure an indulgence for all Nonconformists.¹ The motion was seconded by Lord Aubigny, a Catholic priest, a brother of the Duke of Richmond and much in the King's confidence. Bennet knew of this meeting, but was too prudent to be present; he did not propose to run any risks of damaging his prospects by betraying his real religious leanings. He may indeed be said to have made the best of two worlds, for he kept his opinions so secret that he won the Earldom of Arlington, while he managed at the last to be so long in dying that he was able to be received into the Church of Rome and enjoy her consolations.

When Charles received the invitation of England at Breda, he, in a declaration drafted by Hyde, proclaimed complete liberty to tender consciences, and declared that he was ready to consent to any Act of Parliament that would ensure it. But when Parliament met in 1661 it was clear that the Earl of Clarendon did not propose to endorse the promises drawn up by Edward Hyde.

Yet even Clarendon was not so ferocious in his hatred of Nonconformists and Catholics as were the average members of the House of Commons. He was all for decency and order and the Church as it had been established before the Rebellion. But for the Restoration Man in the Street or Man in Parliament, there was no question of sentimental loyalty to old ways, but a real belief that Catholics were capable at any minute of starting a second Gunpowder Plot, while Protestant Dissenters had cut

¹ Burnet, I. 193.

The Question of Toleration

off the late King's head and were no doubt ready to do the same by the present one. No men are so suspicious as those in a panic, and they quickly began to divine that the King was only considerate to Presbyterian consciences because he wished to secure liberty to the Catholic's.

Act after Act, the Corporation Act, the Act of Uniformity, the Conventions Act, and the Five Mile Act, showed how resolute the English Parliament was to allow no indulgence to any form of Nonconformity. The clergy who had filled the parish pulpits during the Commonwealth were given the alternative of conforming or of resigning their livings. Some 2,000 left their parishes on St. Bartholomew's Day, 1662, and Nonconformist merchants began to debate whether they should take refuge in Holland or New England.

Brutally hard as the Five Mile Act was on many harmless and pious people, it does not seem unreasonable to have ordered that every authorised clergyman and schoolmaster "should not at any time endeavour any alteration of government in Church or State" : indeed, it was hardly necessary for them to attempt alteration on their own account when the members they elected to the House of Commons were said by the French Ambassador to be free not only to speak very plainly but "to do a number of surprising and extraordinary things." ¹

Bristol representing the Catholics, Robartes the Presbyterians, and Ashley who had no particular interest in religion but a great deal in freedom, joined in reminding the King how very far performance had falsified the promises of Breda, and a suggestion was circulated that some sort of Declaration of Indulgence should be issued to calm the fears of Nonconformists. Naturally Bristol got the credit for devising such a scheme, but even he would hardly have ventured to suggest that the King of his own authority should issue a Declaration of Indulgence without any reference to Parliament, and Bennet believed the whole scheme was devised by Charles himself.

Clarendon naturally was horrified by such an unconstitutional proposal and opposed it stoutly in Council. He was defeated, and Bristol and Buckingham felt they had at last scored a victory. The King made no secret of his displeasure with the Chancellor, and it was rumoured that he even thought of taking the seals

¹ Jusserand.

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from him. Pepys wrote on May 15th : " The present favourites now, are my Lord Bristol, Duke of Buckingham, Sir H. Bennet, Lord Ashley and Sir Charles Berkeley, who among them have cast my Lord Chancellor upon his back past ever getting up again, there being now little for him to do, and he waits at Court attending to speak to the King as others do." It was not now Bristol who waited alone in the King's greenroom !

Bristol even insisted on strengthening his position by getting Ashley and Robartes admitted to the secret committee of the King's Council, and actually told Charles if his friends were not admitted he would oblige that committee to disband.¹ But although Charles might treat the Chancellor with coldness, he was not ready to dispense with his services, and for a third time obliged Bristol to consent to a formal reconciliation.

The report of a foreign Ambassador² described the concessions offered to the Puritans as going so far as to dispense ministers from using the Sign of the Cross in baptism and from the use of the surplice. He adds that high words were exchanged between the Chancellor and Lord Bristol in which the Duke of York and the Duke of Ormonde were concerned, and Bristol is reported to have had the best of the argument, declaring that he had left the King in an opinion quite contrary to what the Chancellor reported. Fortunately, or perhaps diplomatically, Clarendon had to retire to bed with a fit of gout, and it fell to Bennet to draft the Declaration. Clarendon, comfortably among his pillows, told Bennet " by the time he had writ as many Declarations as I had done, he would find they are a ticklish commodity."

It then struck Bristol that the worst enemies of toleration must necessarily be the Bishops, and he hastened to remind the King that no indulgence was likely to pass in a House where the Bishops had a vote. The Bishops, turned out of the Long Parliament, had not yet resumed their seats, but Bristol had so often spoken of the necessity of restoring them that the King was surprised by this change of view, till he saw there was a good deal of ground for it, and to the surprise of all not in the secret, the second reading of the Bill for restoring the Bishops was delayed.

The Chancellor was astonished and promptly called the King

¹ Barber, *Arlington*, p. 60.

² De Wiqueford, *S.P. Dom.*, 1662.

Clarendon Wrecks the Indulgence Bill

to book, when he meanly said it was all Bristol's doing. Clarendon at once retorted that all the Catholics' chances for indulgences would be done for if it were once known the Bishops' Bill had been delayed for their sake. So the King, with much docility, agreed with all the Chancellor said and the Bill was passed at once. Clarendon got out of bed to back the Bishops. He tells himself how when he sat with the Bill in his hands ready to present it to the House for the third reading, Bristol "came to him to the Woolsack, and with great displeasure and wrath in his countenance told him that 'if that Bill were read that day, he would speak against it.' To which the Chancellor gave him an answer that did not please him; and from that time the Earl of Bristol was a more avowed and declared enemy to him than he had before professed to be, though the friendship that had been between them had been broken from the time the Earl had changed his religion."¹

The Indulgence Bill was supported in the Lords by Robartes and Ashley, but the opposition was too strong for them, and when the Chancellor hobbled in to read it he was welcomed by the applause of all the Bishops. The Protestant Nonconformists were too intelligent not to see to what such an Indulgence might open the way, and had no intention to be bracketed with the Catholics, so they indignantly refused to accept any relief on such terms and Clarendon's work of destruction was made easier by his finding divisions among the Catholics themselves, which he could very easily increase. The Catholic gentlemen, merchants, and secular clergy only wanted to live in quiet, and had had little sympathy for the Jesuits and foreign priests who came for the avowed purpose of propaganda. Even James of York, who in after days was ready to sacrifice his crown for his faith, told Pope Innocent in words that he might have borrowed from Bristol that "Catholics could contrive to live without the Court of Rome."²

Bennet believed that it was personal pique and jealousy that made Clarendon wreck the Bill, but however that may be, wrecked it was, and the quiet Romanists and the decent Nonconformists all had to suffer for the quarrels of the great folk.

Clarendon then resolved to give the King a lesson as to the

¹ *Cl., Life*, p. 140.

² *Acton, Corr.*, p. 337.

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danger of playing with fire, and he got a Bill introduced making it penal to say that the King was a Papist. The readiness with which the Bill was received showed His Majesty how strong was the feeling against Catholics, and as he could not at present afford to quarrel with Parliament he gave the whole matter up.

XVII

WAR WITH THE CHANCELLOR

THE NEXT INCIDENT in Bristol's career has been thought to show that the King was getting tired of his constant squabbles with the Chancellor, and approved of a plot designed to draw on Bristol the anger of the House of Commons, and so oblige him to retire into private life.¹ It is, however, quite as likely that Bristol was acting as His Majesty's agent on the understanding that the King's name was to be kept out of the business. Unfortunately for Bristol, just at this moment he was without his powerful ally, Lady Castlemaine, for that lady had been rude to the latest Court beauty, la belle Stuart, and had temporarily to retire from competition.

The new difficulty turned on a certain blustering member of Parliament named Temple who had made himself prominent by advocating severity against the Romanists, and actually proposed to exclude the Duke of York from the succession.

This did not seem to be the sort of person with whom Bristol would hob-nob, but any stick would do to use against the Chancellor, and Temple boasted that he was an ally worth having, and that he actually could engineer the King's Declaration of Indulgence to Nonconformists through the Commons without endangering the grants of money which were so desperately needed by the Crown.

Bristol at once saw the value of such an ally, and carried, or was said to have carried, a message on the subject from Temple to the King. But rumours of this intrigue were soon afloat and naturally provoked a storm. Whether the King was frightened by the violence of the feelings aroused, or whether it was all a put-up job, is not at all clear, but he promptly bowed to public feeling and Bristol was disowned.

The version of the affair written by Daniel O'Neill to

¹ Barber, *Arlington*, p. 68.

War with the Chancellor

Ormonde¹ certainly mixes the King up in the business, and though O'Neill did not like Bristol, he was intimate enough with the King to know pretty well what really had happened.

He begins :

Here is one Sir Richard Temple (that unfortunately the King made Knight of the Bath), that once served Cromwell as a domestick servant. This fellow fastens a great friendship upon my Ld. of Bristoll and being a nimble-tongued fellow overcame my Ld.'s easy nature so far as to believe he was able to carry anything in our House, upon which confidence he was brought to the King at the beginning of this session. The King received him well and he undertook much as to the passing of the Declaration which we were then fond of. All the honest party of the House were strongly unsatisfied with the King's making any use of this fellow that really was able to carry nothing for his master's satisfaction. This fellow following rather his natural inclination than obligations to the King found no occasion to disturb his Maj^{ty}'s service or to blast his ministers but layed hould opposite (?) of which the King took notice of to my Ld. of Bristoll and every boddy. My Ld. after discussing with Temple returns with a message from Temple to the King that he would not goe along with those that managed his business in the House but that if his Maj^{ty} would leave the business to him and his friends he should not only have a large supply to put him out of his present wanting condition but his established revenue should be augmented. The King looking upon his undertaking as ridiculous was not shy of talking of it. Some of his servants that found this fellow was endeavouring to persuade the moderate as he had done the more passionate and zealous part of the House that those of the King's servants that were in the House had undertaken the very same things he did himself, persuaded the King to acquaint the House with Jermyn's (?) undertaking. Temple denies flatly he ever sent any such message to the King. However the House ordered he should petition the King for the author. The King would give him no answer but sent an answer to the House without naming the author. The committee noted that the House should make an humble address to his Maj^{ty} to name his author which I hear the King will do when the House demands it. In the meantime I hear my Ld. Bristoll is forbid the King's presence and that this command was sent him by Sir H. Bennet. What means he will use to recover himself or whether he will accuse Temple or noe, my next will inform your grace, for the said Lord is in disorder and little pitied by any that wish well to the King. The Countess of Castlemaine is in no less disorder and is upon the brink of ruin, Mrs. Stewart has got the victory. The other whose violence and spirit can ill endure a rival is ready to leave the court. How *unkingly* all this intrigue is managed I

¹ Carte MSS., 328, 296, June 20, 1663.

The Temple Trouble

need not tell you. That is the subject of all the raillery of all the *French* we have here. What advantage the poor *queene* will get by the change cannot yet well be judged.

On the 27th O'Neill told Ormonde that the King had sent Secretary Morice with a message to the Commons, telling them that it was Bristol who brought the message of Temple to the King. "Bristol desires to speak in our House, but if he do, his eloquence will not serve him."

However, Bristol knew himself and his hearers better than O'Neill did and got his wish. He was summoned to appear before the Commons to explain his conduct. There Pepys relates that he saw a chair set at the bar of the House for Lord Bristol, but he used it little, but made a speech of half an hour, bare-headed, while the House sat covered. Pepys' friend Baker, in his downright English fashion, considered that the speech was "comedian like" and delivered with such action as was not becoming his Lordship, but the charm and eloquence of which Bristol was master carried the day, and he easily stepped out of the trap which his enemies had laid for him.

He had been accused, he said, of carrying messages to His Majesty from Sir Richard Temple, but Sir Richard vowed those messages had never been sent by anyone, and the King affirmed he knew nothing of them. Not for worlds would he contradict His Majesty, but he seemed to have given a false impression, for having noticed there was a prejudice against him, he had refrained for some time from speaking to the King at all, but when he saw an opening, "I told His Majesty with perhaps more of fervour than did become me, that his courtiers gave him wrong measures, and the House was so devoted to him that it would give him all he needed if he did not rely on the false and self-interested measures of certain courtiers."

He admitted that he had made a warning address to His Majesty on Sir Richard's behalf, but this was no message but a confidential undertaking of his own. His Majesty had often vouchsafed to speak with him of business, and he had always delivered his opinion that never King had been so happy in his House of Commons, and all the public affairs he had touched on was to urge His Majesty should not trouble the Commons for money, but let them apply themselves to making laws.

War with the Chancellor

I have been pointed out unto you for an inflamer of His Majesty against his Parliament; for an enemy of the Church of England, and for a dangerous driver-on of the Papistical interest. It is true, Mr. Speaker, I am a Catholic of the Church of Rome, but not of the Court of Rome, no negotiator then for Cardinals' caps for His Majesty's subjects and domestics; a true Roman Catholic as to the other world, but a true Englishman as to this; such a one as had we a King inclined to that profession (as on the contrary we have one of the most firm and constant to the Protestant religion that ever sat upon the throne), I would tell him as freely as the Duke of Sully, a Protestant, told his grandfather, Henry IV., that if he meant to be a King, he must be a constant professor and maintainer of the Religion established in his dominions. . . . I do clearly profess that should the Pope himself invade that ecclesiastical right of his, I should as readily draw my sword against him as against the late Usurper.

He vindicated himself against having added to the King's necessities by accepting his generosity :

Though I have neither offices to keep, nor offices to sell, His Majesty's gifts to me have been great in proportion to my merit, which is none; for in serving and suffering for him with faithfulness, I did but my duty which carries a reward with itself enough to raise a comfort to me from the very ruin of my fortune. It is also true I have had the satisfaction from His Majesty that he never refused me anything I asked him for myself. But I hope I shall make it appear also that I have not only been a very modest asker, but also a most careful one, to ask nothing considerable but what carried advantage with it as well to His Majesty's interest as my own. . . . If there still remains in this incomparable representative of my country any umbrage of danger to it by my access to His Majesty, as, dear as the conversation of the amiablest prince that ever breathed is to me, I shall banish myself for ever from his sight into the obscurest part of his dominions, rather than continue upon the jealousy of those on whom his prosperity depends, or if this be not enough, I shall once more try my fortunes abroad, when I trust this sword, this head, and this heart shall make me live as heretofore, in spite of my enemies with lustre to myself and some honour to my nation.¹

The House decided that Temple had not broken any privilege, and that Bristol had carried himself with all dutifulness to His Majesty, and the House was well satisfied with his respect to them.

Bristol knew Clarendon was at the bottom of this and of any danger that might threaten him. His astonishing skill having got him out of this difficulty he chose a new way of attacking

¹ Cobbett's *Parl. Hist.*, IV. 278.

his Chancellor. Burnet tells us¹ that Bristol had possessed the King with a high opinion of his skill in astrology; for Charles had a genuine curiosity about science, and at that date what might be science and what might be charlatanism was far from decided. Bristol therefore told his ally the Duke of Buckingham that he was confident he could tell that to the King that would totally alienate him from the Chancellor and his dutiful son-in-law the Duke of York; for he could demonstrate by his art that the King was to fall by his brother's means, if not by his hand, and he was sure this would work on the King. It would do so, returned Buckingham, but the wrong way, for it would make the King so afraid of offending his brother that he would do anything rather than provoke him. Yet Bristol persisted in his plan, and Buckingham believed that it had the result he had prophesied, for though the King neither loved nor esteemed his brother, he ever after seemed to stand in some sort of awe of him.

All these plans having failed, Bristol was well nigh driven to desperation, the Chancellor's position seemed founded on a rock. Bristol was growing tired of playing a losing game, he may also have got tired of acting as the King's *âme damnée*, but as the story only comes to us told by two men who hated Bristol, we must take their reports and draw our own conclusions. As it stands, the story is so astonishing that it is no wonder that O'Neill wrote to Ormonde that Bristol really must be mad.

Clarendon makes all Bristol's anger to come from disappointed avarice. He begins by telling us :

Though the Earl of Bristol had left no way unattempted to render himself gracious to the King, by saying and doing all that might be acceptable to him and contriving such meetings and jollities as he was pleased with; and though His Majesty had been several ways very bountiful to him and had particularly given him at one time ten thousand pounds in money, with which he had purchased Wimbledon of the Queen, and had given him Ashdown Forest and other lands in Sussex, yet he found he had not that degree of favour and interest in the King's affections as he desired, or desired that other people should think he had. The change of his religion kept him from being admitted to the Council or to any employment of moment. And whereas he had no doubt of drawing the whole dependence of the Roman Catholics to himself, and to that purpose had the Jesuits firm to him, he found that he had no kind of credit with them and that the Father of the society had

¹ *History*, I. 197.

War with the Chancellor

more enemies than friends among the Catholics. Bristol was extravagant and in straits which he could neither endure nor get from, and which transported him to that degree that he resolved to treat the King in another manner than he had ever yet presumed to do. And having asked somewhat of him that His Majesty did not think fit to grant, he told him: "He knew well the cause of his withdrawing his favour from him; that it proceeded only from the Chancellor who governed him and managed all his affairs whilst himself spent his time only in pleasure and debauchery." And in this passion upbraided him with many excesses to which no man had contributed more than himself. He said many truths which ought to have been more modestly and decently mentioned, and all this in the presence of the Lord Aubigny, who was as much surprised as the King himself, and concluded: "If he did not give him satisfaction within such a time (not exceeding twenty-four hours) he would do somewhat that would awaken him out of his slumbers and make him look better to his own business!" The King stood all this time in such confusion that he had not the presence of mind (as he afterwards accused himself) as he ought to have had, and said he ought presently to have called for the guard and sent him to the Tower.¹

Daniel O'Neill's version of the incident is not so dramatic as Clarendon's, but as he probably got it from the King himself, it either shows what happened or what Charles wished should be thought to have happened.

He writes from Bennet's house on the 20th of June, saying that the King wished Ormonde to know all that was going on. He believed that Lord Bristol as well as Lady Castlemaine had lost their hold on the King. "My Lord is forbid the King's presence and is little pitied by any that wish well to the King."²

Three weeks later he writes :

FROM WHITEHALL, 11th July.

The suite of my lord of Bristoll's madness (of which I writ to your grace as far as it went when in my last) is that the King caling to him for his speech in the House of Commons of which he had heard soe much my lord tould him that he would obey his maj^{tie}. When he did, he would needs read it himself which he did with that passion and vanity that he much disgusted the King, whoe after he heard all, tould him that he heard much ill of that speech, but not half soe much as it deserved, he said that it was vain, mutinous, seditious, and false. My Ld. replied that he saw his enemys had prepossessed his majesty and since his ruin was their design, it was natural for every man to defend himself and that before his fall he would make such a *bussle* as would trouble his peace and the prosperity of others; the King asked whether he threatened,

¹ Cl., *Life*, p. 208.

² Carte MSS., V. 36, 290.

Bristol's Outbreak

him (*sic*) but that he had a charge of hygh treason against my Ld. Chancellor (then faling upon his knee) whom he humbly desired his maj^{tie}'s leave to accuse and that he had his charge in his pocket,¹ the King answered that he would not hinder the course of justice and inquired the charge. My Lord desired his pardon and said he intended to accuse him in parliament. The King answered, My Lord you should have done it without asking my leave, and soe left him. Att this conference there was none by but my Lord Aubiny. My Ld. of Bristoll desired Mr. Secretary Bennett to bee there but he flatly denied him and tould him that he had yet so much kindness for him as not to be a witness of his madness. This conference was the 5th; the day after, the King sent Mr. Secretary Maurice to my Ld. of Bristoll to command he should not come to court nor into his presence. My Ld. incensed by this disgrace gave out that he would first charge the Chancelor in the Lords House but whether the persuasion of his friends or that his heart failed him I know not, but that day he sent sir Kenelme Digby to the King to crave his pardon, that he would not charge the Ld. Chancelor, and whithersoever his Maj^{tie} would . . . he would most willingly obey. The King replied his insolence was too great to be easily pardoned and that his forbearing to charge the Ld. Chancelor he should never account an obligation upon him, and that he had soe little regard of what he did that he was not concerned where he lived. This unexpected retorne to the eloquent speech of Sir Kenelme had much cooled the courage of the Ld. and his party of which My Lord Ashley is the chief; since my Ld. has sent the same Kt. to the Queene Mother to demand an audience of her. She sent to the King and the Duke to know their pleasure they returned that she was at liberty to doe what she thought fitt which was to hear him; since the queen had heard him and tould him she would mediat a reconciliation; which her Maj^{tie} could not effect soe soon as his impatient humour would have. Therefore hee desired her (yesterday?) to desist importuning the King and that hee was resolved to charge my Lord Chancelor of hygh treason this day, which he did with great bouldness and as little discretion as my Ld. Chancelor could have desired. The house did not answer his desire nor expectation in securing of the Chancelor, but ordered the judges to give their opinions a Munday next whether the impeachment was treason by the statutes, that in the meantime the King should have a copy and the Lord Chancelor. Out of that of the King I had this enclosed copy for your grace. The King and the Duke declare highly against this unfortunate man and all that will syde with him. By what I see in his impeachment he expects to have some there to make good his charge. Unless it be my Lord Anglesea, or my Lord Carlingford, I cannot guess who they should be. I am of opinion that the Lords will not judge his charge treason and that they will not call it a libell and punish my Ld. Bristoll for it. It was good luck this folly happened

¹ A copy of Digby's impeachment of the Chancellor is preserved at Sherborne, showing that he and his eldest son thought it worth keeping.

War with the Chancellor

after we gave the subsidies, else your grace possibly might have wanted the supply intended you ; for our house is put into strange disorder by the discovery of our application to Rome. Now I have done with the new post with news.

It will be seen that Clarendon's and O'Neill's stories differ entirely as to the reason of the King's anger, though both agree that Bristol completely lost his temper and behaved in a very unfitting manner, and as part of his accusations touched on the validity of the Queen's marriage, Charles, as a gentleman, was bound to be indignant. Yet Burnet says he took much pains in a soft and gentle manner to dissuade Bristol from the Impeachment of the Chancellor, but he would not be wrought upon. And he told the King plainly that if he forsook him, he would raise such disorders that all England would feel them, and the King himself should not be without a large share in them. The King said afterwards "he was so provoked by this that he durst not trust himself in answering it, but went out of the room and sent the Lord Aubigny to soften him. But all was in vain. It is very probable that the Lord Bristol knew the secret of the King's religion, which both made him so bold and the King so fearful." ¹

As Bristol had threatened, he impeached the Chancellor the very day after his scene with the King. His accusations were : that Clarendon had been bribed to make a disadvantageous peace with Holland, that he had sold Dunkirk to the French, that he had £6,000 given him for promoting the declaration about dividing Irish lands ; that he had arranged the King's marriage with a lady who could bring him no heir, breaking off the match for the King with Parma (which Clarendon shrewdly commented was the chief reason of all this feud), and that he had endeavoured to bring in popery and asked the Pope for a Cardinal's cap for Lord Aubigny. Some also said he laid it on the Chancellor that the Protestant, Sir Edward Nicolas, was laid aside and Bennet, a Roman Catholic, brought in. On this question Clarendon notes that all the world knew Bennet was Bristol's creature and an enemy of the Chancellor, but, as it happened at this time Bennet had hedged and was no friend to Bristol, also he was not yet declaimed a Roman Catholic, so Clarendon does not prove his point.

¹ *History*, I. 196-7.

Impeachment of Clarendon

To return to Bristol. He then lamented that he, for endeavouring to serve his country upon the impulsion of his conscience, was discountenanced and threatened with the anger of his Prince, whilst his adversary kept his place in the House, and had the judges so much at his devotion that they would not certify against him. He added that it would take long to examine the witnesses who could prove the truth of the charges, for the Duke of Ormonde was in Ireland, the Duke of Lauderdale in Scotland, and others in Paris, and also an agent whom he had sent to Portugal to collect evidence was thrown into prison and kept there.

These preposterous charges did not disturb the Chancellor, who answered very composedly that he was glad to learn that my Lord Bristol thought it a crime to send to Rome to desire a Cardinal's cap for a Catholic Lord who had been bred from his cradle in that faith; a neat hit at Bristol's own conversion. But, continued the Chancellor, it happened that Lord Aubigny had not gone to Rome with any desire for a cap, but to carry a private message from the Queen! The Chancellor moved that these charges should be considered. The House of Lords desired the judges to do so, and they gave a formal verdict that even if true none of the charges amounted to High Treason, while the King told the Chamberlain of the House of Lords that he looked on the articles more as a libel against himself than against his Chancellor.¹

The remarks on the royal marriage indeed reflected so much on the King himself that the papers were taken direct to him, and Clarendon remembered with pleasure how after dinner "the King used him with much grace, and told him the Earl of Bristol had not treated him so ill as he had His Majesty, that the articles were much more to the King's dishonour and he would have justice for them."

Ormonde's comment on the performance was: "My Lord Bristol's care for the Protestant religion and against the Pope's ecclesiastical jurisdiction in England is very admirable if it be the sole motive of his zeal against the Lord Chancellor!"²

The Chancellor wrote somewhat contemptuously to Ormonde about "the excellent charges the good Lord Bristol" was bringing

¹ See Bellings to Ormonde, Carte MSS., V. 36, 431.

² Hist. MSS., Comm. Orm. P., July 22, 1663.

War with the Chancellor

against him.¹ Ormonde did not take the matter at all seriously, and replied in his usual vein to Clarendon on the 22nd of July, congratulating him on "the delivery of your daughter, the Duchess of York, of a son, and the delivery of my Lord Bristol's articles against you!"²

Mr. Pepys describes the King as "mighty concerned, and runs up and down to and from the Chancellor like a boy."

O'Neill told Ormonde that the day before Bristol brought his charges against the Chancellor, and for some days after, he quitted the ordinary way of going to the House of Lords, and came through the great Hall and Exchequer Chamber with his hat on his head, saluting with sad and humble countenance all the crowd that followed wishing him all success. He showed himself several days on the Exchange, and told many considerable merchants his story, which is but too well received and credited.³ A warrant was quickly issued for Bristol's arrest, followed by a broadside proclamation on August 25th, calling on all loyal subjects to aid in his apprehension.

But he was not arrested. He was said by some to have escaped from the country and to be in France or Flanders, and later on he certainly wrote to Ormonde from the Continent. But those who wished to add recusancy to his crimes were so disturbed by a report that he was at home and had openly attended divine service at Wimbledon to prove himself to be a Protestant, that his chaplain and three witnesses were arrested for not having detained him. The King so little expected him to hide that he had Sergeants with their maces set at all the doors of the House of Lords to take him if he should come there, which greatly displeased the Lords; but the King declared he intended to show whether he or Bristol were King.

Bristol got a letter presented to the Council, pleading that he had been ready to surrender himself, but had been taken ill on the way, and now knew not how to act as he did not know the legal procedure for a peer to follow when Parliament was not sitting. The King was only the more angry and took possession of the letter and kept it.

One petition of Bristol's does seem to have been publicly read, for the French Ambassador wrote to his King in 1664 that

¹ Carte MSS., 36-430.

² Carte MSS., V. 36, 153.

³ Carte MSS., August 1663, V. 37, 33.

Bristol Reinstated

Bristol had petitioned with great pathos to be allowed to seek medical treatment in London as he was a prey to several diseases, the least of which might prove mortal.¹

Broderick wrote to Ormonde detailing the discredit brought on Lord Bristol by his recent proceedings and the vain endeavour of Lady Bristol to get him back to Court, and continued that the King "reviled Bristol's impudent suggestions and malicious untruths," and added that he thought no age had produced so false and shameless a person.²

Ormonde, who steadily refused to be mixed up with other people's squabbles, only shrugged his shoulders over his friend, and wrote in 1664 that to do something imprudent "were to be as mad as I think my Lord Bristol is."³

At last, the influence of Lady Castlemaine, which revived when Frances Stuart became Duchess of Richmond, induced the King to see his former friend in private, but he was not admitted to Court, and lived in such complete retirement that there is hardly an allusion to him in contemporary gossip until four years after when Clarendon, in his turn, fell from his glory.

When Bristol reappeared before the world, he slid into observation with great tact and was ignored by the King. In July 1667 Pepys said he took his place in the House of Lords, but not wearing his robes, and when the King came in, he went out.

It was natural he should be in his place in the Lords, for at last public feeling was turning against Clarendon. In August the King dismissed the Chancellor from office, in October he was impeached and fled from England. By November the wheel of fortune had taken its full turn, and Pepys wrote: "The King who not long ago did say of Bristol that he was a man able in three years to get himself a fortune in any kingdom in the world and lose it again in three months, do now hug him and commend his parts everywhere above all the world. How fickle is the man!"

What did it all mean? Was the King's anger put on to satisfy the Chancellor? Was he glad of this excuse to get rid of a supporter of Lady Castlemaine? Was he really offended

¹ Arch. Aff. Stn. Ruvigny to Louis.

² Carte MSS., 39, 362, March 24th. Morice to Finch, Hist. MSS. Com.

³ Carte MSS., 39, 431, April 7th.

War with the Chancellor

by Bristol's unpardonable loss of temper? It is very possible that Burnet is right in suggesting that Bristol's threats of turning King's evidence really frightened Charles, and the possibility that he might disclose the King's change of religion may have driven Charles to disown him and so diminish the effect of any confidences he might betray. He would not have been the only servant thrown over when no longer needed. There are historians who believe that Charles's own eldest son, James de la Clôche, ended his days in prison as "the man with the iron mask," because he knew too much about the Treaty of Dover.¹ Charles was not the man to let either his son or his friend send him on his travels by betraying his confidences.

When Clarendon had been persuaded to fly the country, a Bill was passed to proclaim him banished, and passed so unanimously that only four peers, Berkeley, Hollis, Culpepper and Lexington dared raise their voices on behalf of their fallen friend.

Old and ill, the Chancellor was driven out in the worst weather under conditions of the greatest hardship, to the exile of a criminal. The French Court, anxious for an English alliance, tried to show their friendship to the Parliament by behaving with brutality to the old man, and it was long before he was permitted even a decent haven of refuge.

Meantime Bristol triumphantly sat in the House of Lords to hear what should be the fate of his old enemy. The Lords considered precedents on impeachments and decided they could not comply with the Commons' wish to "sequester" Clarendon without any particular treasonable act being specified. Buckingham, Albemarle, Rochester, Arlington and Bristol signed a protest against this action, and the disagreement between the Houses ended in a deadlock. Broderick wrote to Ormonde, "A worse position of affairs this Government does not admit . . . but consequences none can foresee." Ormonde wrote strongly to the King on behalf of his old comrade, but in vain.

During Bristol's fight with Clarendon he had looked round for stouter allies than the time-serving Bennet, and he had found them among the survivors of Cromwell's councillors: Thurloe, Trevor, Admiral Montague, now Earl of Sandwich, and Ashley, Dryden's "Wise Achitophel whom close designs and crooked

¹ *The Valets' Tragedy*, A. Lang.

Bristol and Buckingham Rule

councils fit," and who soon became Earl of Shaftesbury. Thurloe showed him papers proving Cromwell's deep desire to defeat the Dutch, and in consequence Bristol had not opposed Clarendon's unfortunate Dutch war.¹

But now the Commons were not satisfied with having destroyed the Chancellor. They insisted on inquiring into the miscarriages of the war with Holland, and Marvell attacked Bennet (now Lord Arlington) about the Admiralty's ignorance of the movements of the enemy. "We have had Bristol's and Cecil's secretaries, and by them," it was said, "knew of the King of Spain's junto and letters of the Pope's cabinet and now of such a strange account of things!"²

Every one knew what was going on save the Government! But in truth it had been no fault of the late Chancellor that the Dutch war was a tissue of disasters. Money had been voted for ships and munitions, but neither ships nor munitions were forthcoming, and naturally the House of Commons wanted to know what had been done with the money. No one liked to say quite openly that when there was not enough money to go round the King preferred that his seamen and not his mistresses should go short.³ But though the King's responsibility for the trouble was very well known, it suited every one to lay the blame on Clarendon, and the King was happy to be rid of blame and of his Lord Chancellor at the same moment. With Clarendon safe over sea, Pepys wrote in November 1667 that Bristol and Buckingham were now "the only counsel the King follows, so that Arlington and Coventry are come to signify very little."

Coventry, indeed, had lost his influence by his staunchness to the exiled Chancellor and by his resentment at the overbearing absurdities of Buckingham. But he was not dismissed. Pepys explains: "He is so useful that they cannot do without him, but he is not now called by the Cabal."

By December Arlington's skill and industry in doing all the work that Bristol and Buckingham were too fine gentlemen to trouble themselves with, proved he was indispensable. Pepys regretted that Bristol and Buckingham should ever seem to agree with Arlington, but consoled himself "they do not in their hearts trust one another but do drive several ways all of them."

¹ French Arch. Aff. Str., IV, September 1664.

² Barb., p. 130.

³ Trevelyan, *England under the Stuarts*, p. 355.

War with the Chancellor

But Bristol on the whole did not trouble himself much about politics ; he was now fifty-seven, which was a good age in those days, and he had lived every minute of those years. He was said to have "retired from business and lives privately to himself." With two fine houses and the cream of London society to fill them, he did not need politics to add interest to his life, and possibly politics had lost a good deal of zest when they no longer entailed a wrangle with the Lord Chancellor. Bristol's name, strange to say, was not mentioned in connection with the Treaty of Dover or with the King's admission to Clifford, Arlington and Arundel in 1669 that he would be glad to make his conversion to Catholicism public.

The Councillors dissuaded the King from such a suicidal confession, but the suspicions of the Commons had somehow been awakened, and they became more alert than ever to suspect dangers from Rome. In 1672 a fresh Declaration asserting the King's right to grant indulgence to Nonconformists was issued and stimulated the national devotion to the Church of England to boiling-point. The moral standard and the rules of life inculcated by the Church of England might not interest people greatly, but the Church was the bulwark against the Papist, therefore the Church must be supported. To quiet people down the King offered to agree to a Bill for the relief of Nonconformists, without defining his dispensing powers, but the compromise was too transparent to satisfy the Commons. The Declaration was cancelled on the 8th of March, 1673, and a Test Act introduced, providing that all those who refused to take the Oath of Allegiance and Supremacy should be incapable of any military or civil employment.

On this question it was impossible for Bristol to remain silent. Walpole makes merry that Bristol, a Catholic, should have spoken in favour of the Test Act, but Bristol's position was that which he had held ever since the Restoration, and he spoke the language of moderation and common sense. The Bill, he told the House of Lords, affected very few, only such as would fain hold offices and places at the price of hypocrisy and dissimulation of their true sentiments in religion. "My lords," he added, "I am none of these wherry-men in religion who look one way and row another."

The Bill, he said, did not bar Catholics from modest exercise

Bristol's Vindication

of their religion. There was nothing in it of enforcing penal laws or banishing Catholics from the Kingdom.¹

He admitted that he expected to offend both sides, the usual fate of those "who affect to show their subtlety by cutting a feather." But he warned his co-religionists, "that they ought not to speak as Roman Catholics but as members of a Protestant Parliament. He himself was a Catholic of the Church of Rome, but not of the Court of Rome. When he himself became a Catholic he immediately gave up the King's seal (he did not mention how surprised he had been that he had to do so!). The present circumstances of the country and the necessity of composing the disturbed minds of the people made it absolutely necessary to pass the Bill, but, he concluded, "as concerns interfering with the domestic servants of the Queen and the Duke of York, while I have a tongue to speak and the right to use it I shall ever oppose it."

These statesmanlike words were the last spoken by Bristol in the House of Lords. They were printed in a pamphlet with the earlier speech delivered after the difficulties with Sir Richard Temple.

¹ Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.*, IV. 566.

XVIII

RESTORATION SOCIETY

AS BRISTOL had made over Sherborne to his eldest son, when he returned to England he had to find a new home. Characteristically, he spent the whole of the £10,000 given him by the King in buying Wimbledon House, a magnificent palace designed by Thorpe, the architect of Audley End, and said to be quite equal to Nonsuch. Bristol was, however, not satisfied with it, but built on so much and laid out such elaborate terraces and pleasure grounds that he is said to have quite spent another £10,000. Having got this delightful country house, he bought a town house in Queen Street, Lincoln's Inn. Evelyn described that as having a fine long gallery and seven rooms on a floor, so there was no difficulty in entertaining royalty.

In 1666, however, Bristol was living in St. Martin's Lane, and in 1671 the house in Queen Street passed into the hands of the Commissioners of Trade and Plantations, and Bristol moved to Chelsea. There he spent £2,000 on making his house as he wished it. He had a billiard room, an orangery, and a "snow house," apparently what in later days would have been called an "Ice House." There was also an excellent water supply, but Evelyn considered that though the house was large it was ill contrived. After Bristol's death it was sold, and finally it went the way of other London mansions and was pulled down; but the gate, which had been designed by Inigo Jones, was re-erected by Lord Burlington in his garden at Chiswick.¹

As became a man of taste and fashion Bristol hung the walls of his houses with paintings by the favourite artists of the time. Many of them are still in the possession of his family, but one cannot be traced. Virtue describes it as a "curious portrait of the Duchess of Portsmouth and her daughter, she like a Madonna with the Child in her arms," by Lely. Truly the taste of the

¹ Lysons, *Environ of London*, II.

day was curious, and Bristol showed his reverence for the Madonna in an original fashion.

Though Bristol's interest in political life waned as he grew older, he unfortunately never followed the advice the exiled Chancellor prescribed as he wrote the end of his brilliant memoir of his former friend. "If satiety in wrestling and struggling with this world, or a despair" (when did George Digby ever despair!) "of prospering by these strugglings shall prevail with him to abandon those contests and retire at a good distance from the Court to his books and a contemplative life, he may live to a great and a long age, and will be able to leave such information and advertisements of all kinds to posterity that he will be looked upon as a great mirror by which well-disposed men may learn to dress themselves in the best ornaments and spend their time to the best advantage of their country."

But though Bristol was willing enough to amuse his retirement with his pen, he wrote no sequel to his learned discussion on religion with Sir Kenelm Digby, no more history like his brilliant *Relation of the Battle near Newbury*. Clarendon, lonely and forgotten, might write history; Bristol in his beautiful house at Wimbledon wrote plays!

Two plays which he adapted from the Spanish, *'Tis Better than it Was* and *Worse and Worse*, were acted at Davenant's Theatre between 1662 and 1667. Mr. Pepys saw *Worse and Worse* in July 1664, and "very pleasant it was."

It is possible that one of these plays was revised and re-christened in 1667 *Elvira, or the Worst is not always True*, "by a person of quality." The play seems to have been successful, though each scene is about twelve words long, and the actors spend their time in hiding behind curtains or down back stairs; but that may have been more entertaining to see on the stage than it is to read of in a book.

Another play, *The Adventure of Five Hours*, is in much the same style. It was written by Bristol in collaboration with Samuel Tuke, and according to Mr. Pepys Tuke claimed it as his own, and only admitted that Bristol had some hand in it. When the printed copy reached a third edition the title page states it was "revised and corrected by the author Samuel Tuke."

Whatever we may think of *The Adventure of Five Hours*

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to-day, it suited the taste of its contemporaries. Mr. Pepys wrote that he passed his time when he went to Deptford by water "reading Othello's *Moore of Venice*, which I ever heretofore esteemed a mighty good play, but having lately read *The Adventure of Five Hours*, it seems a mean thing."

One of Bristol's songs, "Fair Archabella," was popular in those music-loving days.

Fair Archabella to thy eyes
That flame just blushes to the skies
Each noble heart doth sacrifice.

Yet be not cruel, since you may
When ere you please or save or slay
Or with a frown benight this day.

I do not wish that you should rest
In any unknown high-way breast
The lodging of each common guest.

But I present a bleeding heart
Wounded by love, not prickt by art,
That never knew a former smart.

Be pleased to smile, and then I live,
But if a frown, a death you give
For which it were a sin to grieve.

Yet if it be decreed I fall
Grant but one boon, one boon is all,
That you should me your martyr call.¹

As well as writing poetry, Bristol recast from the French the first three books of the romance *Cassandra*.

The book called *Lord Digby's Arcana Aulica, or Walsingham's Manual of Prudential Maxims for the Statesman and Courtier*, dated 1655, was probably written by his secretary and kinsman Walsingham. There also exists a manuscript *Excerpta e diversis operibus Patrum Latinorum*, which has never been printed.

It is a pity that more of Bristol's fugitive pieces have not been preserved, as they appear to have given the best expression of his brilliant and ready wit. For Bristol had a name among his contemporaries, and Suckling had considered him thirty years

¹ A Wood, *Ath.*, III. 1105.

earlier worthy to sit with Sandys and Aurelian Townshend in the Session of the Poets to choose a Laureate.

There was Selden and he sat hard by the chair,
Wenman not far off which was very fair,
Sands and Townsend, for they kept no order,
Digby and Shillingsworth a little further.

In all the gay society that filled Bristol's stately houses, his daughter Anne must have reigned a queen. She had inherited his wit as well as his beauty, and her character seemed to her contemporaries as full of contradictions as that of her father.

Evelyn, who was her mother's intimate friend, told after her marriage how "the prudence and economy with which she managed her household roused the admiration of all her guests," and to Evelyn she poured out her religious feelings, telling him she was learning every day of her life to care less for the world, and asking his prayers for her husband, who she feared might turn Catholic.

Yet Princess Anne wrote of her to Mary of Orange with a virulence that must have been in revenge for some personal slight. "She is a flattering, dissembling false woman, but she has so fawning and endearing a way that she will deceive anybody at first, and it is not possible to find out all her ways in a little time. She will cheat, though it be for little. Then she has her gallants, although it may be not so many as some ladies here" (the Princess knew how to damn with faint praise!), "and with all these good qualities she is a constant churchwoman, so that to outward appearance one would take her for a saint, and to hear her talk you would think she was a very good Protestant . . . she runs from church to church after the famousest preachers and keeps such a clatter with her devotion that it really turns one's stomach."¹

Princess Anne was a lady of strong prejudices and not very strong judgment, and she was very much afraid of the influence clever Lady Anne and her cleverer husband might exercise over the Prince of Orange. But the prejudice is so glaring that we may still hope that Evelyn's account of her lovely namesake is the truer one.

When the marriage had been arranged between Lady Anne

¹ *Ady, Sacharissa*, pp. 174-5.

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and the Earl of Sunderland, the son of the famed Sacharissa, just when all was prepared for the wedding and even the wedding clothes made, came Bristol's extraordinary scene with the King and the warrant issued for his apprehension.

Lord Sunderland was not sufficiently in love to marry the daughter of a disgraced man, but, so Mr. Pepys tells us, "goes away nobody yet knows whither, sending her the next morning a release of his rights and claims to her, and advice to his friends not to enquire into the reason of this doing, for he hath enough for it ; but that he gives them liberty to say and think what they will of him so long as they do not demand the reason of his leaving her, being resolved never to have her, but the reason he desires and resolves not to give."¹ It all sounds very fine, and covers the disappointed ambition of young Lord Sunderland very nicely at the expense of the character of poor Lady Anne. But after all this vapouring Lord Sunderland found affairs were not entirely hopeless, and in less than a month the wedding took place.² To all appearance the marriage was a harmonious one, for Princess Anne wrote good-naturedly, "never was a couple so well matched as she and her good husband, for she is the greatest jade that ever lived, so is he the subteltest working villain on the face of the earth," and another time adds that Sunderland never did anything without his wife, so there was agreement of some sort between them.³

Of Bristol's eldest son there is little good to report. We know nothing of John Digby's childhood. We cannot doubt that his mother did her best to train him up in the respectable traditions of the Russells, but in the general break up of society under the Commonwealth few traditions can have been respected. There was practically no organised society to encourage decency and dignity of manners, and, as has been well said, "the family life of the rural gentry which had produced generation after generation of Verneys, Hydes, and Hampdens had now for twenty years been broken up, . . . Whether spent at home or abroad the heir's youth had been necessarily divorced from the education, religion, and morals of his own land."⁴

¹ *Diary*, July 1663.

² The D.N.B. makes the marriage occur in 1665.

³ *Ady, Sacharissa*, p. 175.

⁴ Trevelyan, *England under the Stuarts*, p. 350.

Lady Bristol arranged a rich marriage for her son as early as possible, and Sherborne was redeemed and settled on him to enable him to marry Alice, daughter and heir of Robert Bourne of Blackhall, Essex. But at the Restoration he soon showed himself as the worst sort of man about town, and is chiefly remembered for running a race at Newmarket naked.

In the autumn of 1675 he stood for Dorset, and at first Lord Shaftesbury, who was by way of being an ally of Lord Bristol's, made no opposition; but then he seems suddenly to have sprung a candidate of his own, Mr. Moore, on the county; so when Lord Digby met him at the house of a Mr. Tregonwell he accused him of breach of faith, declaring "you are against the King, and for seditions and factions and for a commonwealth, and I will prove it, and by God we will have your head next parliament!"

Shaftesbury coolly brought an action for slander, and got a thousand pounds' damages. Lord Bristol took his son's part so warmly that the Journals of the House of Lords describe November 1675 as "a day of great excitement," when Bristol, supported by Lord Arundel of Trerice, said his mind so plainly about Shaftesbury that he was commanded by the House to ask pardon, "which he presently did."

Lady Digby died young in 1656, and John married a second heiress, Rachel, daughter and co-heir of a Dorset neighbour, Sir Hubert Windham. It would seem as he grew older that he "foreswore sack and lived cleanly," for when he died in 1698, his second wife, in the panegyric with which she adorned his splendid tomb in Sherborne Abbey, mentions, "He was naturally inclined to avoid the Hurry of a public life, yet careful to keep up the part of his quality. . . . He never made his retirement a pretence to draw himself within a narrower compass or to shun such expense as charity, hospitality and his Honour called for," and tells us in words that ring truer than the conventional epitaph that she had "possessed his affection entire, with whom he lived in perfect friendship and confidence, and to whom he left the utmost proof of their reality." This would seem to imply she found his will satisfactory. As he left no children the greater part of his property passed eventually to his sister Lady Sunderland, so that Lord Sunderland had even less cause than before to regret that he had remained faithful to her.

Bristol's second son Francis became a sailor at the time when

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England was involved in that unfortunate third war with Holland, which was undertaken very much to please Louis of France; but the King himself had an old grudge against the States of Holland, which had not been particularly cordial to him in the days of his misfortunes, and all England had been humiliated by Van Tromp's successful raid up the Medway. Pepys had mentioned Francis Digby in 1666 as "a young fellow that was but one year, if that, in the fleet, and said he did hope he should not see a tarpaulin," the nickname given to the old professional sea-dogs, "have the commission of a ship in a month." But inexperienced and conceited though these young courtiers might be, they soon showed they could fight and die like Englishmen. When Pepys wrote of Francis Digby he was only a Lieutenant on the *Royal Charles*, but he soon got a ship of his own and also was made Governor of Deal Castle, which evidently was a sea-going billet, for he wrote to his father from shipboard, and Sir Henry Saville mentioned how he had only missed one of the engagements with the Dutch by "a strange accident, for the day before the battle his main mast was struck down by thunder, so that he was fain to come to port to mend it." *

In the May of 1673 Bristol was visiting his son at Deal. He writes from there anticipating a battle, but hoping it would be fought in the open sea, "as the sandbanks off Deal would be a disadvantage to our fleet." From Margate a Colonel Strobe wrote that he was going off to the fleet with four good pilots, and Lord Bristol wished to accompany him; but Bristol seems to have finally gone to sea in some other vessel, for on the 24th of May Colonel Strobe reported there was no news of Lord Bristol's return nor of his son the Governor.

Bristol's sixty-one years were forgotten when once "the guns began to shoot," and he found it hard not to stay as a volunteer in the fleet with the smart young courtiers who hurried to the coast as soon as the cannon were heard. He lingered to sail up the Channel with Captain Francis on his ship the *Royal James*, and only came on shore at last in a pleasure boat to Yarmouth.

The fleet was nominally commanded by James of York, but under him was Montague, now Earl of Sandwich, of whom Bristol wrote "he is a wise and gallant gentleman." Sandwich was indeed looked on as the ablest seaman of the day, with

* Ady, *Sacharissa*, p. 179.

The Battle of Sole Bay

experience that went back to the time of Blake's victories. But he had no liking for the war, his feelings sided with the Dutch, not with France, and he could not see why England and Holland should not comfortably divide the trade of the world between them. Unluckily most of the King's advisers hated the stout old sea-dog, and the Admiral joined the fleet with deep forebodings, which the affection and respect of his sailors and officers could not make him shake off.

Sandwich had shared Lord Bristol's views of the danger of the Goodwin Sands, and Francis Digby described the Council of War held when Dutch scouts had been seen off the North Foreland. "In this occasion Lord Sandwich was given such advice as became a wise and gallant seaman, and perhaps has hindered us from running into a thousand inconveniences which domestic advisers are always ready by an appearance of courage to draw us into."¹ Sandwich knew his Court enemies were busy behind his back, but he refused to be drawn into fighting among the Sands or in the Dutch home-waters, and insisted on drawing the enemy into the open sea.²

Having joined the French Squadron, the two English divisions, one under the Duke of York, the other under Sandwich, anchored off Southwold. Nobody dreamt of fighting. The Prince's flagship was actually being scraped, and half the crews of the fleet were drinking on shore. Sandwich dined on board Francis Digby's ship when Lord Mulgrave said he "showed a gloomy discontent, so contrary to his usual cheerful humour that we even then all took notice of it, but much more afterwards." Lord Bristol must have been one of the guests at this dinner as he did not go ashore till the 27th.

But at dawn next morning the fleet was startled by the news that the enemy had not waited to be looked for. The blame of the surprise was laid on the Duke of York's Captain Cox, who was misled by the reports of his own scouts.

Sandwich seemed to feel this would be his last battle, and he dressed for it with the greatest care, putting on his Garter Jewel and many rings, and as he left his cabin he turned to his secretary and said, "Now, Val, I must be sacrificed." Owing to the unreadiness of the fleet, the van of each squadron became the rear, and the ships were so crowded together that they could

¹ Cal. S.P. Dom.

² *Montague, Harris*, II. 258.

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not manoeuvre. Early in the battle the Duke of York's ship, the *Royal Prince*, was so severely knocked about that he had to leave her and hoist his flag on the *St. Michael*. Then when the smoke cleared a little it was seen that the *Royal James* was in flames. The Duke ordered the *Dartmouth* to stand by and rescue, and from the survivors he heard that Captain Digby had destroyed two fireships, and seeing a third bearing down on him he stepped forward to the fire-boom to encourage his men, and was shot in the breast, dying at once. His crew were so dismayed at their loss that the Dutch succeeded in boarding and taking the ship, "but in a moment the English recovered their spirits and forced the Dutch overboard."¹ Sandwich himself was now engaged with three or four of the best Dutch ships. His Captain was wounded, and his ship was in a blaze; Sandwich himself was wounded in both a leg and an arm, and knowing the end was near he called his page to him, kissed him and bade him farewell. As the flames gained on the ship the wounded Captain, who had been carried below, crept out of a porthole and swam two miles to safety, on the flagship the last of the great Commonwealth Admirals was left alone. The lookers on from the Suffolk coast told that the sea was as smooth as a millpond, and that they watched the funeral pyre blaze till late in the evening, when nothing was left but the blackened hull to sink under the sea. No one knows how Sandwich died, but a fortnight later his body was washed up near Harwich with the George and Star still on his breast, and was laid with splendid ceremony in Henry the Seventh's Chapel. Captain Digby was carried back to his mother's home and laid among the Russells in their Chapel at Chenies.

How Bristol suffered for the loss of the son he evidently loved we do not know. We know nothing of his inner life, only of a gay pageant of music and pictures and beautiful women dancing and acting in the fine houses in Lincoln's Inn Fields or Wimbledon.

One of these beautiful ladies, a kinswoman of Bristol's, narrowly escaped being as well known as the Castlemaine or the Duchess of Portsmouth. Broderick wrote the story to Ormonde in his usual budget of gossip.

The lady was² Margaret, daughter of Sir William Brooke, K.B., and at one of Bristol's entertainments the King

¹ Silas Taylor, Cal. S.P. Dom.

² D.N.B.

The Story of Lady Denham

was evidently much struck by her. Lady Castlemaine, however, saw to it that Miss Brooke should not get in her way, and then James of York tried to seize the opportunity of stepping into His Majesty's shoes. But Miss Brooke seemed to prefer a more secure position, and married a fashionable elderly poet, Sir John Denham. He was rich and a favourite at Court for his wit and his verses.

But the Duke of York was not daunted by Miss Brooke having become Lady Denham, and got her appointed one of the ladies to the Duchess of York. This so enraged the elderly bridegroom that he went out of his mind, and so frightened his wife that she had to take refuge at Lord Bristol's. But before long gossips said the Duke was getting bored by Lady Denham, and Pepys reported she troubled the Duke with talk about matters of State, "she being of my Lord Bristol's faction."

Then her health gave way, and in a year the hapless beauty was dead. It was hinted her illness came from a cup of poisoned chocolate. Whether it was administered by her jealous husband or Lady Rochester people were not decided,¹ but that she was poisoned and that her troubled spirit found no rest was believed by most people, who even reported that the Duchess of York had seen the ghost.²

Sir John was not inconsolable. He quickly recovered of his madness, if he had ever been mad, came to Court as usual, and composed the most popular of all his songs which the King himself sang every evening to the tune of "Which nobody can deny."³

And so they danced and laughed and made love, and Bristol strolled through it all with the beautiful languidly contemptuous face Vandyke has made familiar to us, hiding a great deal of real good nature under the fashionably cynicism and the fashionable coarseness which will not bear repetition to-day.

One cannot help wondering what Evelyn's friend Lady Bristol, that "grave and honourable lady," did in that galley!

And at last the end came. Bristol was so happy as to die before the horrors and scandals of Titus Oates and his Popish Plot endangered the life and liberty of English Catholics. His will, dated 1677, bequeathed the house in Chelsea to his Countess,

¹ Wood, *Ath.*, II. 826.

² D.N.B.

³ Carte MSS., V. 47. *Grammont's Mems.*, pp. 102, 207.

Restoration Society

and he desired he should be buried in the church belonging to the parish where he should die. Lady Bristol, however, had him laid beside their son Francis in the Chenies Chapel on the 24th of March, 1677. There, after his adventurous life, he lies quiet, and it is to be hoped his dreams are not disturbed by the knowledge that his wit, his learning, and his beauty are chiefly now remembered because they were chronicled by a disgraced exile, who summed them up pitilessly and pronounced a judicial verdict on the life and talents he held to have been wasted when they were not mischievously misused.

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